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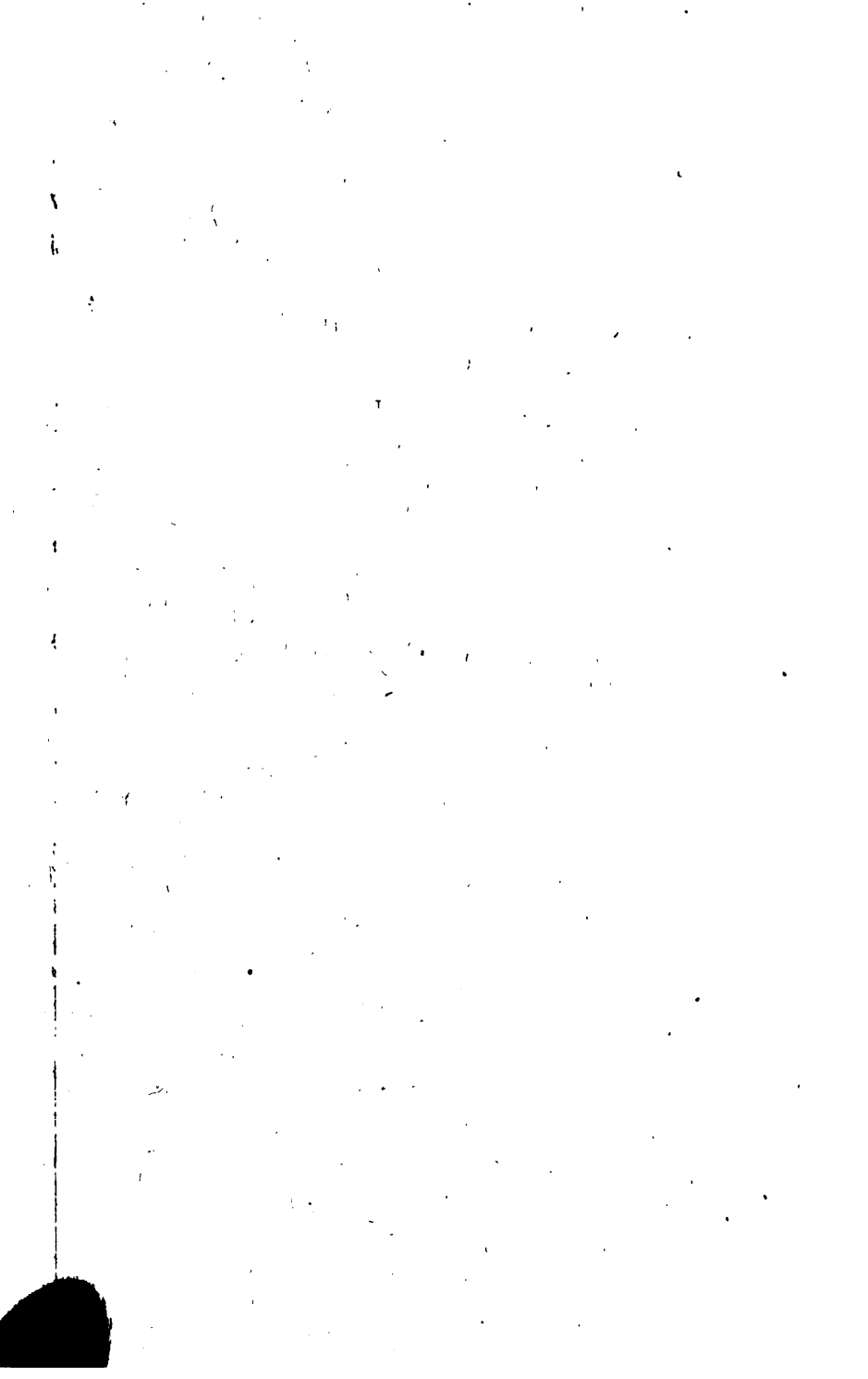
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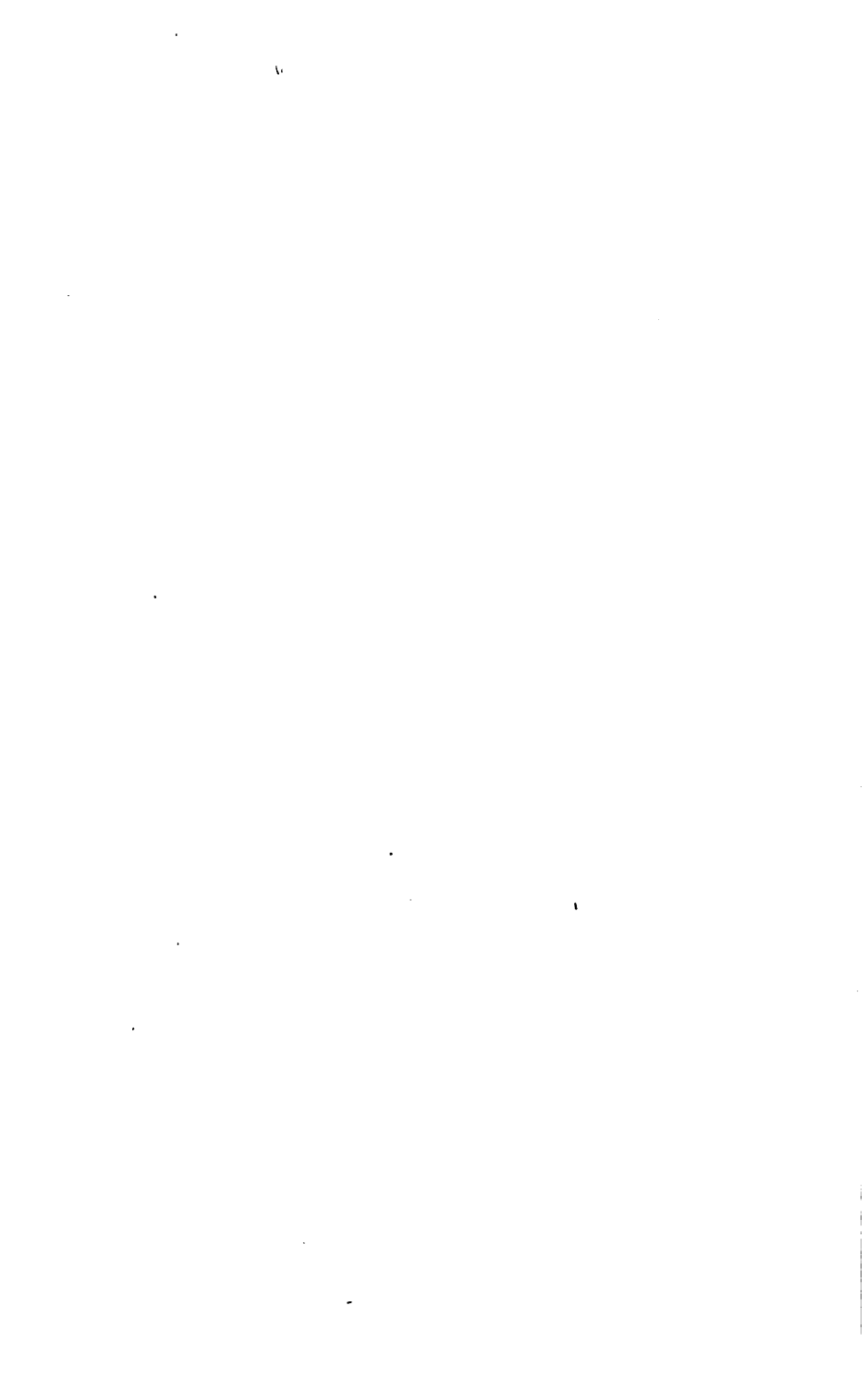
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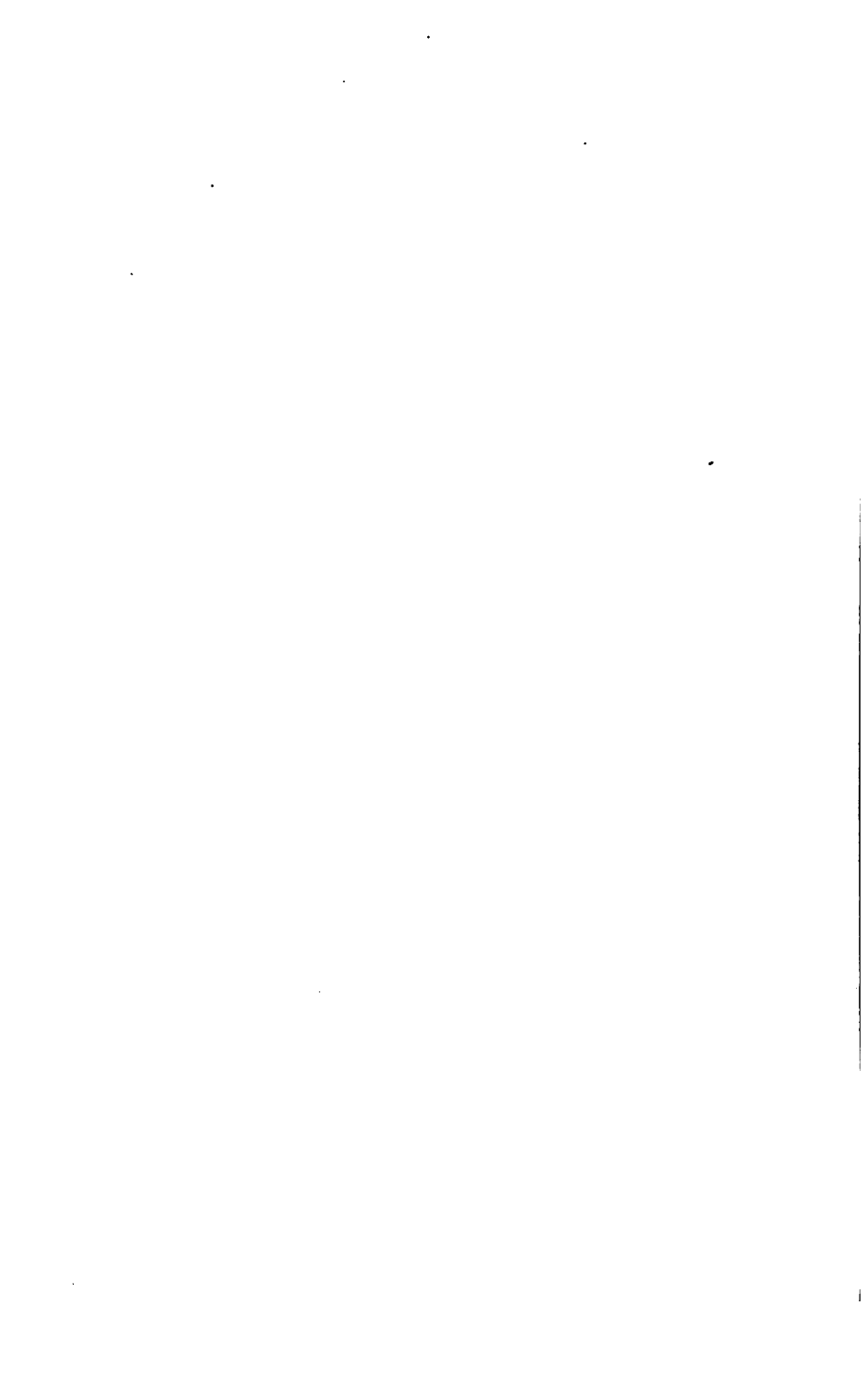
CATHERINE GANSEVOORT LANSING

*granddaughter of
General Peter Gansevoort, junior
and widow of the
Honorable Abraham Lansing
of Albany, New York*

Hugo
NKV

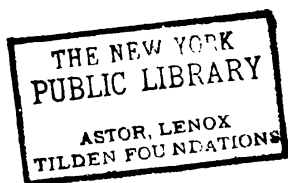






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Déruchette and Mess Lethierry.

(Photogravure from a drawing by Edmund H. Garrett.)

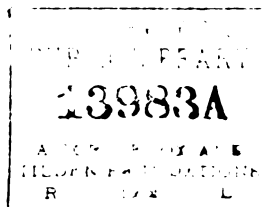
THE NOVELS AND POEMS
OF
V I C T O R
MARIE HUGO
VOLUME IX

THE TOILERS OF THE SEA
VOLUME I



NEW YORK CHICAGO
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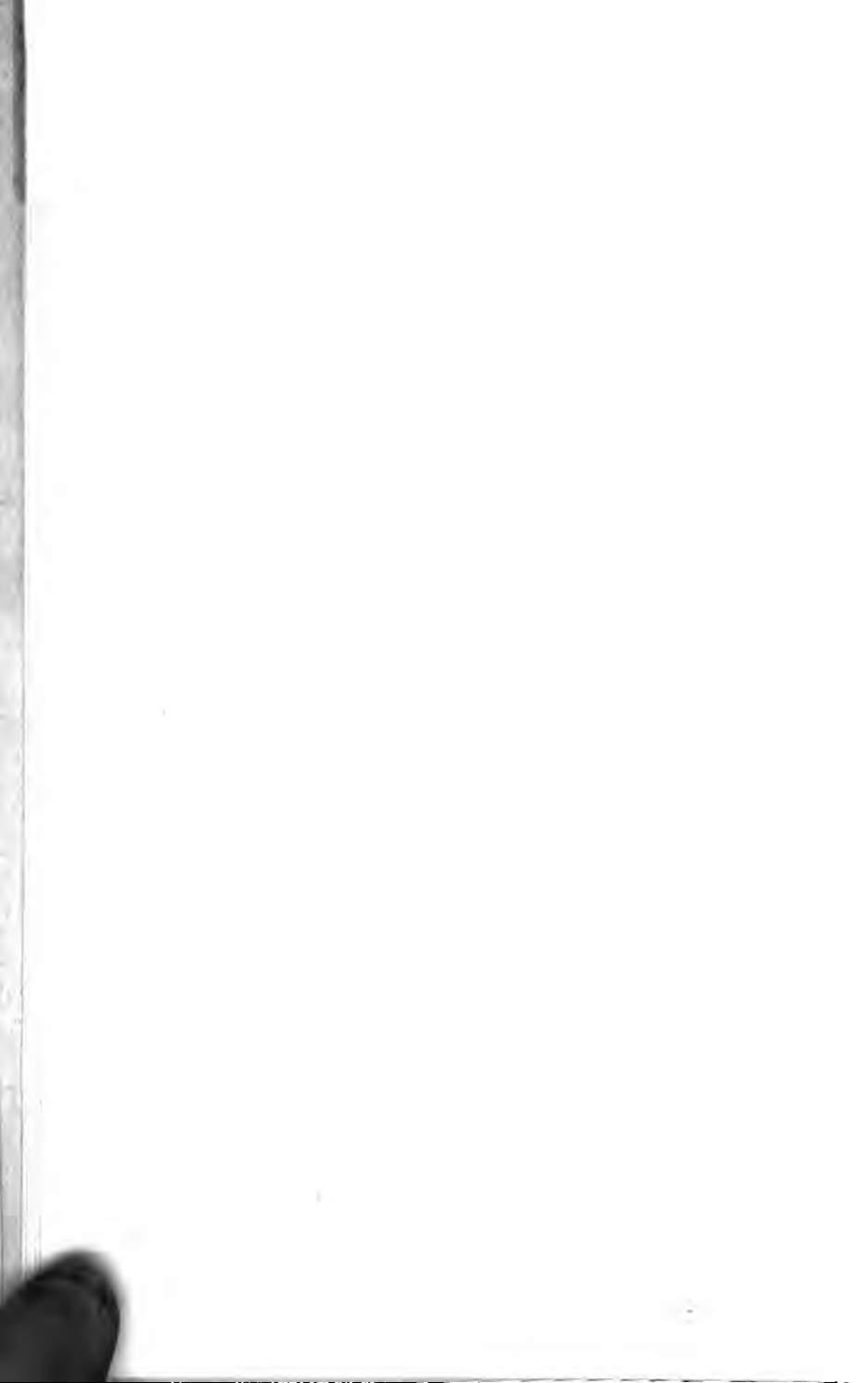


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NOV 1888

Dedication.

I dedicate this book to the rock of hospitality and liberty, to that nook of ancient Norman soil where dwells the noble little race of the sea, to the Isle of Guernsey, severe yet gentle, my present asylum, my probable tomb.



P R E F A C E.

RELIGION, society, nature; these are the three struggles of man. These three conflicts are, at the same time, his three needs: it is necessary for him to believe, hence the temple; it is necessary for him to create, hence the city; it is necessary for him to live, hence the plow and the ship. But these three solutions contain three conflicts. The mysterious difficulty of life springs from all three. Man has to deal with obstacles under the form of superstition, under the form of prejudice, and under the form of the elements. A triple *anankè** weighs upon us, the *anankè* of dogmas, the *anankè* of laws, the *anankè* of things. In "Notre Dame de Paris" the author has denounced the first; in "Les Misérables" he has pointed out the second; in this book he indicates the third.

With these three fatalities which envelop man is mingled the interior fatality, that supreme *anankè*, the human heart.

HAUTEVILLE HOUSE, March, 1866.

* Ἀνάγκη, necessity.



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THE TOILERS OF THE SEA.

PART I.

SIEUR CLUBIN.



BOOK FIRST.

WHAT A BAD REPUTATION IS COMPOSED OF.

CHAPTER I.

A WORD WRITTEN ON A BLANK PAGE.

THE Christmas of 182— was remarkable in Guernsey. It snowed on that day. In the Channel Islands, a winter where it freezes to the point of forming ice is memorable, and snow is an event.

On the morning of that Christmas day, the road which skirts the sea coast from Saint-Peter's Port to le Valle was perfectly white. It had been snowing from midnight until dawn. About nine o'clock, a little after sunrise, the road was almost deserted, as it was not yet time for the Anglicans to go to the church of Saint-Sampson, or for the Wesleyans to go to the Eldad chapel. In the portion of the road which separates the first tower from the second tower, there were but three passers-by, — a child, a man, and a woman. These three wayfarers, walking at a distance from each other, had evidently no connection with each other.

The child, aged about eight years, halted, and looked at the snow with curiosity. The man followed the woman at an interval of a hundred paces. He, as well as she, was proceeding in the direction of Saint-Sampson. The man, who was still young, seemed something like a working-man or a sailor. He wore his everyday clothes, — a jacket of coarse brown cloth, and trousers with tarred leggings, — which seemed to indicate that, notwithstanding the festival, he

was not on his way to any chapel. His thick shoes of undressed leather, their soles garnished with big nails, left upon the snow an imprint more resembling the lock of a prison than the foot of a man.

The woman wayfarer already had on, evidently, her church toilet; she wore a large wadded mantle of black corded silk, beneath which she was very coquettishly attired in a gown of Irish poplin in alternate stripes of pink and white, and, but for her red stockings, she might have been taken for a Parisienne. She advanced with a light, free vivacity, and one divined that she was a young girl from that walk which had, as yet, borne no burden of life. She had that fugitive grace of bearing which marks the most delicate of transitions, youth, the two twilights mingled, the beginning of womanhood, the end of childhood. The man did not notice her.

All at once, near a clump of green oaks standing at the corner of a small garden, at the spot called Basses-Maisons, she turned around, and this movement made the man look at her. She halted, seemed to reflect for a moment, then stooped down, and the man thought that she wrote something on the snow with her finger. She straightened herself up, set out on her way again, and redoubled her pace; turned once more, this time with a laugh, and disappeared on the left of the road, in the path bordered by hedges which leads to the Château of Lievre. When she turned for the second time, the man recognized Déruchette, a bewitching girl of the neighborhood.

He felt no desire to hasten his steps, and a few minutes later he found himself near the group of oaks, at the corner of the garden. He was no longer thinking of the pedestrian who had disappeared, and it is probable that if, at that moment, some porpoise had leaped out of the sea or some redbreast appeared on the bushes, this man would have passed on his way, with his eyes fixed on the porpoise or the redbreast.

Chance ordained that he should have his eyes cast down. His glance fell mechanically on the place where the young girl had paused. Two tiny feet were imprinted there, and

beside them he read this word, traced by her in the snow,
"GILLIATT."

That word was his name.

He was called Gilliatt.

He remained for a long time motionless, gazing at that name, at those little footprints, at the snow, then he pursued his way pensively.

CHAPTER II.

THE BÜ DE LA RUE.

GILLIATT dwelt in the parish of Saint-Sampson. He was not beloved. There were reasons for this:—

In the first place, he lived in a “haunted” house. It sometimes happens that in Jersey or in Guernsey, in the country or even in the city, in passing through some deserted nook, or in a street full of inhabitants, you will meet with a house whose entrance is barricaded; holly obstructs the door; plasters of planks, well nailed on, close up the windows of the ground floor; the windows of the upper stories are both open and shut, all the sashes are barred, but all the panes are broken. If there be a paddock, a yard, the grass is growing there; the encircling parapet is crumbling; if there be a garden, it is all nettles, brambles, and hemlock, and strange insects may be there espied. The chimneys are cracked, the roof is falling in; what can be seen of the interior of the rooms is dismantled; the wood is rotten, the stone is damp. On the old walls there is paper which is peeling off. Thereon you can study the old fashions of wall-paper: the griffins of the Empire, the crescent-shaped draperies of the Directory, the balusters and small columns of Louis XVI. The thickness of the webs, full of flies, denotes the profound peace enjoyed by the spiders. Sometimes one perceives a broken jug on a shelf. That is a “haunted” house. The devil comes thither at night.

A house, like a man, can become a corpse. A superstition suffices to kill it. Then it is terrible. These dead houses are not uncommon in the Channel Islands.

Rustic and maritime populations are not at ease on the score of the devil. Those of the channel, an English archipelago on a French sea coast, hold very well-defined ideas with regard to him. The devil has envoys all over the earth. It is certain that Belphegor is the ambassador of hell in France, Hutgin in Italy, Belial in Turkey, Thamuz in Spain, Martinet in Switzerland, and Mammon in England. Satan is an emperor, like any other. Satan Cæsar. His household is very well appointed: Dagon is grand seneschal; Succor Benoth is head of the eunuchs; Asmodeus, banker of the gaming-table; Kobal, director of his theatre; and Verdelet, grand master of ceremonies; Nybbas is the buffoon. Wiérus, a learned man, and a good authority on witches and demons, calls Nybbas, the "great parodist."

The Norman fishermen in the channel have to take many a precaution when they are on the sea, because of the illusions which the devil creates. It was long thought that Saint-Maclon dwelt on the great square rock of Ortach, which lies in the open sea between Aurigny and Casquets, and many old sailors were wont to affirm in former days that they had very often seen him, from a distance, sitting there and reading a book. Hence mariners, as they passed, made many a genuflection before the rock of Ortach, until one day the fable was destroyed to make way for the truth. It was discovered, and it is known at the present day, that the inhabitant of the rock of Ortach is not a saint, but a devil. This devil, a certain Jochmus, had the audacity to pass himself off for several centuries as Saint-Maclon. However, the church herself falls into these mistakes. The devils, Raguhel, Oribel, and Tobiel were saints until 745, when Pope Zachary, having scented them out, expelled them. One must be very learned in demonology in order to effect these expulsions, which are certainly very useful.

The old people of these parts relate — but these facts belong to the past — that the Catholic population of the Norman archipelago was, in former days, and in spite of itself, in

closer communication with the demon than the Huguenot population. Why? We know not. One thing is certain, that this minority was formerly much annoyed by the devil. He had conceived an affection for the Catholics, and sought their society, which would lead one to suppose that the devil is Catholic rather than Protestant. One of his most unendurable familiarities was to make nocturnal visits to the conjugal beds of Catholics, when the husband was wholly, and the wife half asleep. Hence misunderstandings.

Ratouillet thought that this was the manner of Voltaire's birth. There is nothing improbable about it. Moreover, this case is fully known and described in the formulæ of exorcism under the heading: — *De erroribus nocturnis et de semine diabolorum*. At Saint-Hélier it raged with special violence towards the end of the last century, probably as a punishment for the crimes of the revolution. The consequences of excesses of the revolution are incalculable. However that may be, this possible advent of the demon at night, when one does not see clearly, when one is asleep, troubled many orthodox women. There is nothing agreeable about giving birth to a Voltaire.

One of them, being troubled in her mind, consulted her confessor on the means of clearing up this equivocal situation in season. The confessor replied, "In order to assure yourself whether you have to do with the devil or your husband, feel his forehead, if you find horns there you may be sure. . . ." "Of what?" asked the woman.

The house wherein Gilliatt dwelt had been haunted, but was so no longer. It was, therefore, all the more suspected. No one is ignorant of the fact than when a sorcerer installs himself in a haunted dwelling the devil considers that house sufficiently well guarded, and shows the sorcerer the politeness of not returning thither unless invited like a doctor.

This house was called the Bû de la Rue, the end of the street. It was situated at the point of a tongue of land, or rather rock, which formed a tiny separate anchorage in the

inlet of Houmet-Paradis. The water is deep there. This house stood completely alone on this point, almost outside the island, with just enough land for a tiny garden. High tides sometimes flooded the garden. Between the port of Saint-Sampson and the inlet of Houmet-Paradis, rises the large hill surmounted by the group of towers and ivy called the Château du Valle, or of the Archangel, so that, from Saint-Sampson, the Bù de la Rue was not visible.

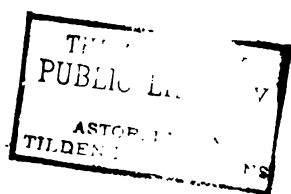
Nothing is more common than sorcerers in Guernsey. They exercise their profession in certain parishes, and the nineteenth century affects it not in the least. They indulge in regular criminal practices. They boil gold. They gather herbs at midnight. They cast the evil eye upon peoples' cattle. People consult them, they cause the "water of sick people," to be brought to them, and they are heard to say in a low tone, "the water appears to be very cloudy." One day in 1857, one of them discovered the presence of seven devils in "the water." of a sick person. They are feared and formidable. One of them recently bewitched a baker, "as well as his oven." Another one has the wickedness to close and seal with the greatest care "envelopes with nothing in them." Another, still, even indulges so far as to keep in his house, on a shelf, three bottles labelled B. These monstrous facts have been proved.

Some sorcerers are obliging, and take your maladies upon themselves for two or three guineas. In this case, they writhe on their beds, giving vent to cries. While they are writhing you say: "Stay, there is no longer anything the matter with me." Others cure you of all complaints by knotting a kerchief round your body. The means is so simple that one marvels that no one has already hit upon it. In the last century, the royal court of Guernsey put them on a pile of fagots and burned them alive. In our day it condemns them to eight weeks in prison on bread and water, and four weeks in close confinement, alternately. *Amant alternæ catenæ.*

The last burning of sorcerers in Guernsey took place in 1747. The city utilized for that purpose one of its squares, the Carrefour du Bordage. The Square du Bordage beheld eleven sorcerers burned between 1565 and 1700. As a rule, the culprits confessed. They were aided to their confession by torture. The Carrefour du Bordage has rendered other services also to society and religion. Heretics were burned there. Under Mary Tudor, a mother and her two daughters were burned: the mother's name was Perrotine Massy. One of the daughters was with child. She brought forth the child in the coals of the pile of fagots. The chronicle says: "Her belly burst." A living child came forth; the new-born infant rolled out of the fiery furnace; a certain House picked it up. Bailiff Héliér Gosselin caused the child to be flung back into the fire.

*She stooped down and wrote something
on the snow with her finger.*





CHAPTER III.

FOR YOUR WIFE WHEN YOU MARRY.

LET us return to Gilliatt.

It was said in the countryside that a woman, having with her a little child, had come to dwell in Guernsey towards the close of the Revolution. She was English, unless she was French. She bore some name or other, which Guernsey pronunciation and peasant orthography converted into Gilliatt. She lived alone with the child who was, according to some, her nephew, according to others, her son, according to others, her grandson, according to others still, no relation at all to her. She had a little money, on which she lived in a poor way. She bought a bit of meadow land at la Sergentée, and a piece at Roque-Crespel, near Rocquaine. At that epoch, the house at the Bû de la Rue was haunted. No one had lived in it for thirty years. It was falling into ruins. The garden, too frequently visited by the sea, could produce nothing. Besides the nocturnal sounds and lights, the house had this peculiarly alarming feature about it, that if one left a ball of worsted on the chimney-piece, in the evening, with needles and a full plate of soup, one found the soup eaten the next morning, the plate empty, and a pair of mittens knitted. This old house was offered for sale, together with the demon who was in it, for a few pounds sterling. This woman purchased it, evidently tempted by the devil—or by the low price.

She did more than buy it, she lived in it with her child; and from that moment the house quieted down. "That house has what it wants," said the people of the country. It ceased to be haunted. Cries were no longer heard there at daybreak. There was no longer any light, except the tallow candle burned

in the evening by the good woman. The candle of a witch is equivalent to the torch of the devil. This explanation satisfied the public.

This woman turned to account the few roods of land which she possessed. She had a good cow that furnished yellow butter. She harvested white beans, cabbages, and "golden drop" potatoes. She sold, like everybody else, "parsnips by the barrel, onions by the hundred, and beans by the denereal." She did not go to the market, but had her harvest sold by Guilbert Falliot, at the Abreuvers of Saint-Sampson. Falliot's register shows that he once sold for her as much as twelve bushels of "potatoes called three months of the earliest variety."

The house had been wretchedly repaired, just sufficiently to admit of living in it. It only rained into the rooms in very hard storms. It was composed of a ground floor and an attic. The ground floor was divided into three rooms, two for sleeping and one where they ate. The attic was reached by a ladder. The woman did the cooking and taught the child to read. She did not go to any of the churches, which caused her to be regarded, on due consideration, as a Frenchwoman. Not to go "to any place" is serious.

In short, they were enigmatical people.

It is probable that she was French. Volcanoes cast forth stones, and revolutions cast forth men. Families are thus sent to great distances, destinies are expatriated, groups are dispersed and crumbled to pieces: people fall from the clouds, some in Germany, some in England, some in America. They astonish the natives of the country.

Whence come these strangers?

That Vesuvius smoking yonder has spit them out. Names are conferred on these *aërolites*, on these expelled and lost individuals, on these people eliminated by fate; they are called *émigrés*, refugees, adventurers. If they remain, they are tolerated; if they take their departure, people are relieved.

Sometimes they are absolutely inoffensive individuals,

strangers,—the women at least—to the events which have driven them forth, cherishing neither hatred nor resentment, greatly astonished and involuntary projectiles. They take root again as best they may. They have harmed no one, and do not understand what has happened to them. I have seen a poor tuft of grass dashed wildly into the air by an explosion in a mine. The French revolution, more than any other explosion, was characterized by these distant projections.

The woman who was called “la Gilliatt” in Guernsey was, perchance, such a tuft of grass.

The woman grew old, the child became a youth. They lived alone and were avoided. They were sufficient for each other. “The she-wolf and her cub lick each other in turn.” This is one of the proverbs which the kindness environing them applied to them. The youth became a man, and then, since the old and withered barks of life must always fall, the mother died. She bequeathed him the meadow of the Sergentée, the jaonnière of the Roque-Crespel, the house of the Bû de la Rue, besides, as the official inventory says, “*cent guinées d’or dans le pill d’une cauche*,” that is to say, in the foot of a stocking. The house was sufficiently furnished with two oaken coffers, two beds, six chairs, and one table, with the requisite utensils. On a shelf were several books, and in one corner a trunk which was not in the least mysterious, and which had to be opened for the inventory. This trunk was of tawny leather with arabesque patterns in copper nails and pewter stars, and contained a woman’s outfit, new and complete, in handsome Dunkirk linen, shifts and petticoats, and silk gowns in the piece, with a paper on which they read the following, written by the hand of the dead woman:—

“For your wife, when you marry.”

This death was an overwhelming blow for the survivor. He had been shy, he became wild. The solitude around him was complete. It was not alone isolation, but a blank. As long as there are two, life is possible. Alone, it seems as though one could no longer drag it. One ceases to pull. This is the

first form of despair. Later on, one comprehends that duty consists in a series of submissions. One looks at death, one looks at life, and one accepts. But it is a submission which makes the heart bleed.

Gilliatt being young, his wound healed over. At that age, the flesh of the heart unites again. His sadness, effaced little by little, mingled with the nature about him, became a sort of charm, attracted him to things, and far from men, and amalgamated this soul ever more and more with solitude.

CHAPTER IV.

UNPOPULARITY.

GILLIATT, as we have said, was not beloved in the parish. Nothing more natural than this antipathy. Motives abounded. In the first place, the house in which he lived, as has just been explained.

Next, his origin. Who was that woman? And why that child? The country folk do not like enigmas connected with strangers. Then, his dress, which was that of a working man, while he had enough, although not rich, to live upon without doing anything. Next, his garden, which he succeeded in cultivating, and from which he produced potatoes, in spite of equinoctial gales. Next, the big books which lay on his shelf and which he read.

There were still other reasons.

Why he did he live a solitary life? The *Bâ de la Rue* was a sort of lazar-house; Gilliatt was kept in quarantine; that is why it was very simple that people should be amazed at his isolation and should hold him responsible for the solitude which they created around him.

He never went to chapel. He often went out by night. He talked to sorcerers. Once he had been seen seated on the grass with an astonished look on his face. He haunted the dolmen of Ancresse and the fairy stones which lie here and there about the country. People thought that they felt sure of having seen him salute the Singing Rock politely. He bought all the birds that were brought to him and set them at liberty. He was civil to people in the streets of Saint-Sampson, but he made a circuit to avoid passing through it. He often went fishing and always came home

with fish. He worked in his garden on Sunday. He had a bagpipe purchased of some Scotch soldiers passing through Guernsey, and which he played among the rocks on the sea-shore at nightfall. He made gestures like a sower. What treatment can be expected for a man like that?

As for the books which came from the dead woman, and which he read, they were suspicious. The Reverend Jaquemin Hérode, Rector of Saint-Sampson, when he entered the house for the funeral of the woman, had read on the backs of the books such titles as these: "Rosier's Dictionary;" "Candide," by Voltaire; "Advice to the Public with regard to Health," by Tissot. A French emigrant gentleman, who had retired to Saint-Sampson, had said: "This must be the Tissot who carried the head of the Princesse de Lamballe."

The reverend gentlemen had noticed upon one of the books this really crabbed and ill-sounding title: "De Rhubarbaro."

Let us say, however, that the work being written in Latin, as the title indicates, it is doubtful whether Gilliatt, who did not know Latin, read this book.

But it is just those books which a man does not read which condemn him the most. The Spanish Inquisition passed judgment on this point and placed it beyond a doubt.

However, this was only Doctor Tillingius's treatise on rhubarb, published in Germany, in 1679.

People were not sure that Gilliatt did not make charms, philtres, and "distilled waters." He had phials.

Why did he go to walk in the evening, and sometimes even until midnight on the downs? Evidently, with the object of conversing with the evil spirits who are to be found by night in the mists along the seashore.

Once he helped the sorceress of Torteval — an old woman named Moutonne Gahy — to extricate her wagon from the mud.

On being interrogated as to his profession, during a census taken in the island, he replied: "Fisherman — when there are any fish to catch." Put yourself in the place of these people — such replies are not liked.

Wealth and poverty are comparative terms. Gilliatt had meadows and a house, and, compared with those who have nothing at all, he was not poor. One day, in order to try him and perhaps with the object of making advances to him, for there are women who would marry the devil if he were rich, a girl said to Gilliatt: "When are you going to take a wife?" He replied: "I will take a wife when the Singing Rock takes a husband."

This Singing Rock is a huge, erect stone, planted upright in a garden near M. Lanézurier de Fry. This stone requires much watching. No one knows why it is there. A cock which is not seen, can be heard crowing there, an extremely disagreeable thing. And then, it is averred that it was placed in that garden by sarregousets, which are the same thing as *sins*.

At night, when it thunders, if one sees men flying through the red of the clouds and through the quivering of the air, they are sarregousets. A woman who lives at Grand-Mielles knows them. One evening when there were sarregousets in a public square, this woman cried to a carter who did not know which road to take: "Ask your way of them; they are well-disposed folk, and very civil to strangers." One might lay a heavy wager that this woman was a sorceress.

That learned and judicious king, James I., had women of this sort boiled alive, tasted the broth, and decided from the taste of the broth, "She was a witch," or "She was not one."

It is to be regretted that the kings of the present day do not possess these talents, which make one comprehend the utility of the institution.

It was not without serious cause that Gilliatt lived in the odor of witchcraft. Being at sea at midnight during a storm, alone in a bark near the Sleeper (*Sommeilleuse*), Gilliatt was heard to inquire, —

"Is there room to pass?"

A voice cried from the summit of the rocks, —

"Certainly! Courage!"

To whom was he speaking, if not to some one who replied to him? This seems to us a proof.

On another stormy evening, so dark that nothing could be seen, quite close to the Catiau-Roque, which is a double row of rocks where sorcerers, goats, and hobgoblins go on Friday to dance, people were certain that they had recognized Gilliatt's voice, mingled in the following terrible conversation, —

"How is Vésin Brovard?" (This was a mason who had fallen from a roof.)

"He is recovering."

"True God! he fell from a higher spot than that great beam. It is a miracle that he broke no bones."

"The people had fine weather for seaweed last week."

"Better than to-day."

"Certainly! There will not be much fish in the market."

"The wind is too high."

"They will not be able to lower their nets."

"How goes it with Catherine?"

"To a charm."

"Catherine" was evidently a sarregousette.

Gilliatt, to all appearances, was dealing in deeds of darkness. At least, no one doubted it.

He was sometimes seen pouring water on the earth from a jug which he had. Now, water cast on the ground takes the shape of a devil.

There exists on the road to Saint-Sampson, opposite Martello-tower number one, three stones arranged in the form of a staircase. They formerly sustained on their platform, now empty, a cross — unless they upheld a gibbet. These stones are very malign.

Very good and wise men and absolutely trustworthy persons affirmed that they had seen Gilliatt in conversation with a toad near these stones. Now, there are no toads in Guernsey; Guernsey has all the snakes, and Jersey has all the

toads. This toad must have swum from Jersey to talk with Gilliatt. The conversation was friendly.

These facts were demonstrated; and the proof is that the three stones are still there. People who doubt can go and see them, and at a little distance there is even a house on whose corner this sign may be read: "Dealer in cattle, dead and alive, old cordage, iron, bones, and chewing tobacco; is prompt in payment and in his attention."

A person must needs be very incredulous to dispute the presence of these stones and of this house. All this injured Gilliatt.

The ignorant alone are ignorant of the fact that the greatest danger of the Channel Seas is the king of the Auxcriniers. No marine personage is more to be feared. Any one who sees him is shipwrecked between one Saint-Michel and the other. Being a dwarf, he is small, and being a king, he is deaf. He knows the names of all those who have died in the sea, and the spot where they are. He knows that cemetery, the ocean, thoroughly.

A head massive below and narrow above, a thickset body, a deformed and viscous belly, warty knots upon his skull, short legs, long arms, fins instead of feet, claws in place of hands, a large, green face, — such is this king. His claws are webbed, his fins provided with nails. Let the reader imagine a spectral fish with the face of a man.

To get rid of him, it is necessary to exorcise him or to fish him up from the sea. In the meanwhile, he is sinister. Nothing is more frightful than a sight of him. Above the surges and the billows, behind the denseness of the fog, one catches sight of an outline which is a being; a low brow, a flat nose, flattened ears, a huge mouth lacking teeth, a glaucous grin, eyebrows in the shape of chevrons, big, merry eyes. He is ruddy when the lightning is livid, and pallid when the lightning is crimson. He has a stiff, dripping beard, which spreads out, cut square, on a membrane in the shape of a shoulder cape, which is ornamented with fourteen shells, seven in front and seven behind.

These shells are extraordinary for those who are well posted in shells.

The king of the Auxcriniers is visible only when the sea is violent. He is the lugubrious juggler of the tempest. His form is seen, roughly outlined in the mist, in a squall, in the rain. His navel is hideous. An armor of scales covers his sides like a waistcoat. He stands erect on the crest of those rolling waves which gush forth beneath the pressure of the gusts, and writhe like shavings from the joiner's plane. He rears himself fully out of the foam, and if there are, on the horizon, ships in distress, he dances, livid in the gloom, his face lighted up by a vague smile, with a mad and terrible air.

This is an evil meeting.

At the time when Gilliatt formed one of the preoccupations of Saint-Sampson, the last persons who had beheld the king of the Auxcriniers declared that his cape now had but thirteen shells. Thirteen; nothing can be more dangerous. But what had become of the fourteenth? Had he given it to any one? And to whom had he given it? No one could say, and people confined themselves to conjectures. One thing is certain, that M. Lupin-Mabier, of the Place of les Godaines, a man possessed of land, a proprietor taxed at eighty quarters, was ready to take his oath that he had once seen in Gilliatt's hands a very singular shell.

It was no rare thing to hear such dialogues as the following between two peasants, —

"Have I not a fine ox yonder, neighbor?"

"He's bloated, neighbor."

"Well, 'tis true all the same!"

"He's better as tallow than as meat."

"Good heavens!"

"Are you sure that Gilliatt has not looked at him?"

Gilliatt paused at the edge of the fields near the laborers, and at the borders of gardens near the gardeners, and he sometimes uttered mysterious words.

"When the devil's bit thrives, reap the winter rye."

(Parenthesis: the devil's bit is scabious.)

"The ash is in leaf, there will be no more frost."

"Summer solstice, thistle in flower."

"If it rain not in June, the wheat will turn white. Fear the mildew."

"The wild cherry tree is forming its clusters; beware of the full moon."

"If the weather on the sixth day of the moon is like that of the fourth day or of the fifth day, it will be the same nine times out of twelve in the first case, and eleven times out of twelve in the second, during that entire moon."

"Have an eye on the neighbors at law with you. Beware of malice. A pig to whom one has given warm milk, bursts. A cow whose teeth have been rubbed with a leek, will eat no more."

"The smelt is milting, beware of fevers."

"The frog is showing himself, sow melons."

"The hepatica is in flower, sow barley."

"The linden is in bloom, mow the meadows."

"The white poplar flowers, open the forcing-frames."

"The tobacco is in blossom, close the hot-houses."

And, terrible to relate, if they followed his advice, they found it of advantage.

One night in June, as he was playing the bagpipe on the downs, in the direction of Denire de Fontenelle, the mackerel fishing proved a failure.

One evening, at low tide, on the strand opposite his house, Bû de la Rue, a cart, loaded with seaweed, was upset. He was probably afraid of being brought before the courts, for he took a great deal of trouble to help lift the cart, and he reloaded it himself.

A little girl in the neighborhood being troubled with lice, he went to Saint-Pierre-Port, returned with an ointment and rubbed the child with it; Gilliatt had freed her from her lice, which signified that Gilliatt had given them to her.

Every one knows that there is a charm for giving lice to people.

Gilliatt was reputed to look at wells, which is dangerous when the glance is evil, and it is a fact that one day at Arculons, near Saint-Pierre-Port, the water in a well became unwholesome. The good woman to whom the well belonged, said to Gilliatt: "Look at this water." And she showed him a glassful of it. Gilliatt admitted it. "The water is thick, it is true," he said. The good woman, who was suspicious of him, said: "Cure it for me." Gilliatt questioned her whether she had a stable?—whether the stable had a drain?—whether the stream from the drain did not pass quite close to the well? The good dame said "yes." Gilliatt entered the stable, worked at the drain, turned the stream aside, and the water became good once more. In the countryside, people thought what they pleased. A well does not become bad, then good again, without a cause; the trouble with this well was not considered natural at all, and it is, in fact, not difficult to believe that Gilliatt had cast a spell on that water.

Once, when he went to Jersey, it was noticed that he lodged in the Rue des Alleurs, at Saint-Clement. Alleurs are ghosts.

In villages, signs concerning a man are picked up; these signs are put together; the total forms a reputation.

It chanced that Gilliat was caught when he had a bleeding at the nose. This seemed serious. The skipper of a bark, who had nearly made the circuit of the globe, affirmed that among the Tungus all sorcerers bleed at the nose. When one sees a man bleeding at the nose, one knows with whom one has to deal. Nevertheless, reasonable people pointed out that what characterizes sorcerers in Tungusia may not, to the same degree, characterize sorcerers in Guernsey.

In the vicinity of Saint-Michel, he was seen to halt in a meadow belonging to the gardens of the Huriaux, bordering the highway of the Videclins. He whistled in the meadow,

and a moment later, there was a crow there; a moment later still, a magpie. The fact was attested by a notable man who was afterwards a douzenier * of the dozen authorized to make a new survey and register of Perchage of the Fief le Roi.

At Hamel, in the vingtaine † of the Épine, there were old women who were positive that they had heard swallows calling Gilliatt one morning at daybreak.

Add to this that he was not of a good disposition.

One morning, a poor man was beating an ass. The ass would not go on. The man kicked him in the belly, and the ass fell. Gilliatt ran to raise the ass, the ass was dead. Gilliatt boxed the man's ears.

Another day, seeing a boy descending from a tree with a brood of young woodpeckers, featherless and unfledged, Gilliatt took the brood from this boy, and carried his malice to such an extent as to put them back in the tree.

Some passers-by reproached him for this, he confined himself to pointing to the old birds screaming above the tree, and who returned to their brood. He had a weakness for birds. This is a sign by which magicians are generally recognizable.

Children delight in searching out the nests of gulls, and sea-birds in the cliffs. They bring back quantities of blue, yellow and green eggs, with which to make circular ornaments for the fronts of chimneys. As the cliffs are perpendicular, their foot sometimes slips, they fall and are killed. Nothing is so pretty as screens decorated with the eggs of sea-birds. Gilliatt knew not how to invent anything except what was bad. At the peril of his life he climbed down the abrupt faces of the rocks on the shore, and hung up trusses of hay, old hats, and all sorts of scarecrows, in order to prevent the birds from making their nests there, and, consequently, the children from going there.

This is why Gilliatt was almost hated by his neighbors.

* A member of the administrative council in Jersey and Aurigny.

† A division of the parish in the Norman Isles.

CHAPTER V.

OTHER SUSPICIOUS THINGS ABOUT GILLIATT.

OPINION was not thoroughly settled in regard to Gilliatt.

He was generally believed to be a "marcou," some even went so far as to think him a "cambion." A cambion is the son of a woman and the devil.

When a woman has, by one husband, seven male children in succession, the seventh is a "marcou." But no female child must interrupt the series of boys.

The marcou has a natural fleur-de-lis imprinted on some portion of his body, which gives him the power of healing scrofula, equally with the kings of France. There are marcous almost everywhere in France, particularly in the Orléanais. Each village of the Gâtinais has its marcou. In order to cure the sick, it is only necessary for the marcou to breathe upon their sores, or to let them touch his fleur-de-lis. The experiment is chiefly successful on the night of Good Friday. Ten years ago, the marcou of Ormes, in Gâtinais, surnamed "The Handsome Marcou," and consulted by all Beauce, was a cooper named Foulon, who had a horse and a carriage. The gendarmerie had to be brought out, in order to prevent his miracles. He had the fleur-de-lis under his left breast. Other marcous have it elsewhere.

There are marcous in Jersey, in Aurigny, and in Guernsey. This arises, no doubt, from the rights which France holds over the Duchy of Normandy. Otherwise, to what purpose the fleur-de-lis?

There are also scrofulous persons in the Channel Islands, which renders marcous necessary.

Several persons who were present on one occasion when Gilliatt was bathing in the sea, thought they saw the fleur-de-lis on him. Being questioned on that subject, he merely burst out laughing. For, like other men, he sometimes laughed. From that time forth, no one ever saw him bathe; he bathed only in solitary and perilous places. Probably at night, by moonlight; a suspicious circumstance, as the reader must admit.

Those who persisted in believing him to be a cambion, that is to say a son of the devil, were evidently mistaken. They should have known that there are no cambions except in Germany. But fifty years ago, le Valle and Saint-Sampson were regions of ignorance.

It is manifestly absurd to believe that any one in Guernsey is a son of the Devil.

Gilliatt was consulted simply because he made people uneasy. Peasants came with fear and trembling, to tell him about their maladies. This fear begets confidence: and, in the country, the more the physician is suspected of magical powers, the more efficacious the remedy. Gilliatt had prescriptions of his own, which he had inherited from the old dead woman; he bestowed them on those who asked, and would take no pay. He cured whitlow by the application of herbs, the liquor from one of his phials cut short the course of a fever; the chemist of Saint-Sampson, whom we should call a *pharmacien* in France, thought that it was probably a decoction of cinchona. The most ill-disposed willingly acknowledged that Gilliatt was a very good fellow for sick people where his ordinary remedies were concerned; but he would hear nothing as to being a *marcou*; if a scrofulous person asked leave to touch his fleur-de-lis, his only reply was to shut the door in his face; he absolutely refused to perform miracles, which is ridiculous in a sorcerer. Do not be a sorcerer; but, if you are one, fulfil your profession.

There were one or two exceptions to the universal antipathy. *Sieur Landays du Clos-Landès* was clerk of the parish

of Saint-Pierre-Port, custodian of the documents and guardian of the register of births, marriages, and deaths. This clerk Landays, was proud of being descended from the Treasurer of Bretagne, Pierre Landais, hung in 1485. One day, Sieur Landays, while bathing, ventured too far out into the sea and came near drowning. Gilliatt plunged into the water, came near drowning also, and saved Landays. From that day forth, Landays said no more evil words of Gilliatt. To those who expressed surprise at this, he replied, —

“Why do you wish me to detest a man who has done me no harm, and who has rendered me a service?”

The clerk-registrar even came to admit Gilliatt to a certain friendship. This registrar was a man devoid of prejudices. He did not believe in sorcerers. He laughed at those who were afraid of ghosts. As for himself, he had a boat in which during his leisure hours he fished for amusement, and he had never seen anything extraordinary, unless occasionally a white woman leaping over the water in the moonlight, and even of that he was not quite sure. Moutonne Gahy, the witch of Torteval, had given him a little bag to fasten under his cravat, as a protection against evil spirits; he jeered at this bag and did not know what it contained; nevertheless, he wore it, feeling himself more secure when he had that charm on his neck.

Some bold persons ventured to follow the example of the Sieur Landays, and to admit some attenuating circumstances in Gilliatt's favor, some appearances of good qualities, his sobriety, his abstinence from gin and tobacco, and they sometimes even went so far as to bestow upon him this fine encomium: “He neither drinks, nor smokes, nor chews, nor takes snuff.”

But sobriety is a good quality only when one possesses other virtues.

Public aversion rested upon Gilliatt.

At all events, Gilliatt, being a *marcou*, could render service. On a certain Good Friday, at midnight, the day and hour em-

ployed in that sort of cures, all the scrofulous persons in the island, through inspiration, or by appointment among themselves, came in a mass to the Bû de la Rue, with clasped hands and pitiable sores, to ask Gilliatt to cure them. He refused. In this his malevolence was recognizable.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PAUNCH BOAT.

SUCH was Gilliatt.

The young girls thought him ugly.

He was not ugly. He was, possibly, handsome. There was a certain antique, barbarian grace in his profile. In repose, he resembled a Dacian of the column of Trajan. His ear was small, delicate, without any lobe, and of an admirable form for hearing. Between his eyebrows was that proud, vertical wrinkle which indicates the bold and persevering man. The corners of his mouth drooped, which denotes bitterness; his brow had a certain serene and noble curve, his frank eye looked at one steadily, although troubled by that contraction of the lids which fishermen acquire, from the reflection of the waves. His laugh was youthful and charming. No ivory was whiter than his teeth. But the sun had burned him almost as black as a negro. One cannot meddle with impunity with the ocean, the tempest, and the night; at thirty years of age he appeared forty-five. He wore the sombre mask of the winds and of the sea.

He had received the nickname of Gilliatt the Crafty.

An Indian fable says: "One day Brahma asked Force, 'Who is stronger than you?' She replied, 'Adroitness.'" A Chinese proverb says, "What could not the lion do, if he were a monkey!"

Gilliatt was neither a lion nor a monkey, but the things that he did confirmed the Chinese proverb and the Hindoo fable. Of ordinary stature and ordinary strength, he was able (so inventive and powerful was his dexterity) to lift the burdens of a giant, and to perform the prodigies of an athlete.

There was something of the gymnast about him; he used with equal facility his right hand or his left.

He did not hunt, but he fished. He spared birds, but not fish. Woe to the dumb.

He was an excellent swimmer.

Solitude creates men of talent or idiots. Gilliatt presented himself under both aspects. At times he was seen with the "astonished air," of which we have spoken, and one would have taken him for a brute. At other moments, he had an indescribably deep glance. Ancient Chaldæa had men like this; at certain hours the dulness of the shepherd became transparent and allowed the mage to be seen.

In short, he was only a poor man who knew how to read and write. It is probable that he stood on the boundary line between the dreamer and the thinker. The thinker wills, the dreamer is passive. Solitude adds to the simple, and modifies them to a certain extent. They become permeated, unconsciously, with a kind of sacred awe. The gloom in which Gilliatt's mind dwelt was composed in almost equal quantities of two elements, both dark, but very different. Within him, ignorance, weakness; outside of him, mystery, immensity.

By dint of climbing the rocks, scaling the cliffs, going and coming in the archipelago in all weathers, of managing the first boat which presented itself, of risking himself day and night in the most difficult passages, he had come to be a surprising seaman, but without drawing any advantage from it, and for his own whim and pleasure.

He was a born pilot. The true pilot is the mariner who navigates the bottom of the sea even more than its surface. The waves are an external problem, continually complicated by the submarine configuration of the places through which the vessel's course is directed. It seemed when one beheld Gilliatt sailing across the shallows and reefs of the Norman archipelago, as though he possessed, beneath the arch of his cranium, a chart of the bottom of the sea. He knew all and braved all.

He knew the buoys in the channels better than the cormorants who perched upon them. The imperceptible differences which distinguish the four upright buoys of the Creux, Alligande, the Trémies, and the Sardrette from each other, were perfectly distinct and clear to him, even in a fog. He neither hesitated over the stake with an oval ball at Anfré, nor the triple lance-iron of le Rousse, nor the white ball of la Corbette, nor the black ball of Longue-Pierre, and there was no fear of his confounding the Cross of Goubeau with the sword planted in the earth at la Platte, nor the hammer buoy of the Barbées, and the swallow-tailed buoy of the Moulinet.

His rare science as a mariner was demonstrated with especial brilliancy one day when there was at Guernsey one of those sorts of maritime jousts called regattas. The problem was as follows: to navigate alone a boat with four sails, from Saint-Sampson to the Isle of Herm, which is one league distant, and to bring it back to Saint-Sampson. There is no fisherman who cannot manœuvre a boat with four sails, and the difficulty does not seem to be great, but this is what increased it.

In the first place, the boat itself, which was one of those large and heavy deep-bellied boats of the Rotterdam pattern, which the sailors of the last centuries called "Dutch Paunches." This ancient Holland lighter, low-lying and broad in the beam, with lee-boards on the starboard, and port sides which are let go, sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other, according to the wind, and which take the place of a keel, are still to be met with occasionally at sea.

In the second place, the return from Herm was rendered more difficult by a heavy ballast of stone. They were to go out empty and return loaded. The prize of the contest was the "Paunch." It was given in advance to the winner. This paunch had served as a pilot boat; the pilot who had commanded and sailed it for twenty years was one of the most robust mariners of the channel; at his death, no one could be found to sail her, and it was decided to make it the prize of a

regatta. Though not decked over, she had good qualities, and might tempt a skilful seaman. The mast was placed on the bow, which increased the drawing power of the sails. Another advantage, the mast did not interfere with the cargo. It had a solid hull; heavy but roomy, and kept the open sea well; a really serviceable boat.

There was much eagerness in the contest; the task was a hard one, but the prize was fine. Seven or eight fishermen, the most vigorous on the island, presented themselves. They tried in turn; not one of them could get as far as Herm. The last who contended was noted for having rowed, in rough weather, across the redoubtable gut which lies between Sark and Brecq-Hou. Dripping with perspiration, he brought back the boat and said: "It is impossible."

Then Gillatt stepped into the craft, first seized the oar, next the main sheet, and stood out to the open sea. Then without making fast the sheet, which would have been imprudent, and without letting go of it, which kept the sail under his control, he allowed the sheet to run along the traveller at the will of the wind, without falling to leeward, and grasped the helm with his left hand. In three quarters of an hour, he was at Herm.

Three hours later, although a strong south wind had risen and was blowing across the roadstead, he returned to Saint-Sampson with his cargo of stones. By way of luxury and bravado he had added to the cargo the little bronze cannon of Herm, which the people of that isle fired every year on the fifth of November, in sign of rejoicing over the death of Guy Fawkes.

Guy Fawkes has been dead, we may remark in passing, two hundred and sixty years; 'tis a very long period of joy.

Gilliatt, thus overloaded and encumbered, steered back, one might say brought back, the boat to Saint-Sampson, although he had the Guy Fawkes cannon on board besides.

On seeing this, Mess Lethierry exclaimed: "Here's a bold sailor!"

And he offered his hand to Gilliatt.

We shall speak of Mess Lethierry again.

The paunch was adjudged to Gilliatt.

This adventure did not injure his nickname of the crafty.

Some persons declared that there was nothing astonishing about the thing, since Gilliatt had concealed a branch of wild *mélier* in his boat. But this could not be proved.

From that day forth, Gilliatt had no other vessel but the paunch. In that heavy craft he went fishing. He moored it in the very good little anchorage which he had for his private use under the very wall of his house of the *Bû de la Rue*. At nightfall, he threw his nets over his shoulder, crossed his garden, climbed over the parapet of dry stones, sprang from one rock to another, and leaped into the boat. Thence to sea.

He caught many fish, but it was affirmed that the branch of *mélier* was always attached to his boat. The *mélier* is the medlar tree. No one had seen the branch, but every one believed in it.

What fish he had more than he needed, he did not sell, but gave away.

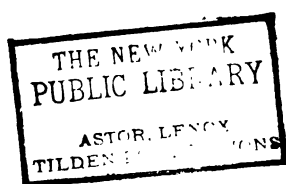
The poor accepted his fish, but cherished a grudge against him, notwithstanding, on account of that branch of medlar tree. Such things should not be done. One should not trick the sea.

He was a fisherman, but he was not that alone. From instinct, and in order to direct his mind, he had learned three or four trades. He was a joiner, a blacksmith, a cartwright, a caulker, and even a bit of a machinist. No one could mend a wheel better than he. He fabricated all his fishing implements in a manner peculiar to himself. In one corner of the *Bû de la Rue*, he had a little forge and an anvil, and, as the paunch had but one anchor, he had himself and alone made a second for it. This anchor was an excellent one; the ring was of the proper strength, and Gilliatt, without any one having told him, discovered the exact dimensions which the stock must have to prevent the anchor from tripping.

He had patiently replaced all the nails in the planking of

On the beach.





the paunch by tree-nails, which rendered rust-holes impossible.

In this manner he had greatly improved the good sea qualities of the paunch. He took advantage of it to go from time to time, to spend a month or two in some solitary islet, like Chousey or the Casquets. People said, —

“Stay, Gilliatt is gone away.” This caused no one any regret.

CHAPTER VII.

FOR A HAUNTED HOUSE, A VISIONARY INHABITANT.

GILLIATT was a man of dreams. Hence his audacity, hence, also, his timidity. He had ideas on many things peculiarly his own.

There was, perhaps, in Gilliatt, something of the man of hallucinations and visions. Hallucination haunts a peasant like Martin, as well as a king like Henri IV. The Unknown sometimes gives the spirit of man surprises. An abrupt rent in the gloom suddenly permits a glimpse of the invisible, then closes again. These visions are sometimes transfiguring; they convert a camel-driver into Mahomet, and a goatherd into Jeanne d'Arc. Solitude generates a certain quantity of sublime exaltation. 'Tis the smoke of the burning bush. The result is a mysterious lucidity of mind which converts the student into a seer, and the poet into a prophet; the result is Horeb, Kedron, Ombos, the intoxication of the laurels of Castalia chewed, the revelations of the month Busion; it results in Peleia at Dodona, Phemonaë at Delphi, Trophonius at Lebadea, Ezechiel on the Chebar, Jerome in the Thebaid.

Generally, the visionary state overwhelms the man and stupefies him. There is such a thing as sacred brutalization. The fakir's vision is a burden to him, as his goitre is to the Crétin.

Luther, speaking to the devils in the attic at Wittenberg; Pascal, masking hell with the screen in his cabinet; the negro, Obi, conversing with the white-faced god Bassum — present the same phenomenon differently interpreted by the brains which

it traverses, according to their force and dimensions. Luther and Pascal were and remain great; the Obi is imbecile.

Gilliatt was neither so high nor so low. He was a dreamer. Nothing more.

He looked on nature a little strangely.

As he had often happened to find in perfectly limpid sea water tolerably large animals of strange and various shape of the species medusa, which, out of water, resembled soft crystal, and which thrown back into the water blended with their surroundings in transparency and color, he drew the conclusion that since living transparencies inhabit the water, other transparencies, equally living, might also inhabit the air.

Birds are not inhabitants of the air; they are amphibious. Gilliatt did not believe that the air was deserted.

He said: "Since the sea is filled, why should the atmosphere be empty? Creatures of the color of the air would be effaced in the light, and would elude our vision; who can prove to us that there are none such? Analogy indicates that the air must have its fish, as well as the sea; these fish of the air would be diaphanous, a mercy of creating providence for us as well as for them; allowing the light to pass through their forms, casting no shadow, and possessing no outline, they would remain unknown to us, and beyond our grasp. Gilliatt imagined that if the earth could be drained of atmosphere, and that if one could fish in the air as in a pond, one would find a multitude of surprising beings; and, he added, in his reverie, "many things would be explained."

Reverie, which is thought in a nebulous state, borders closely on sleep, and is bounded by it, as its frontier. The air inhabited by living transparencies would be the beginning of the unknown; but beyond, the vast opening of the possible presents itself. There other beings, there other facts. No supernatural sin; but the occult continuation of infinite nature. Gilliatt, in that laborious idleness which constituted his existence, was a close observer. He even went so far as to include

sleep in the domain of his observations. Sleep is in contact with the possible, which we call also the improbable. The nocturnal world has an existence of its own. Night, as night, is a universe in itself. The material human organism on which weighs an atmospheric column fifteen leagues in height, is fatigued at night, it is sinking with lassitude, it lies down, it rests; the eyes of the flesh close; then, in that sleeping head, less inert than is generally believed, other eyes open: the Unknown makes its appearance. The sombre things of the unknown world become the neighbors of man, either because there is actual communication or because the distant vistas of the abyss gain a visionary exaggeration; it seems as though the indistinct inhabitants of space come to look at us, and that they have a curiosity about us, the inhabitants of earth; a phantom creation ascends or descends toward us, and envelops us in a twilight; before our spectral contemplation, another life than ours assembles and disperses, composed of ourselves and of something else; and the sleeper, not fully aware nor fully unconscious, catches a glimpse of these strange animals, these extraordinary vegetations, these terrible or smiling lividnesses, these larvæ, these masks, these figures, these hydras, these confusions, this moonlight without a moon, these obscure decompositions of the marvellous, these augmentations and diminutions in a troubled thickness, these floatings of forms in the shadows, all that mystery which we call dreams, and which is nothing but the approach of an invisible reality. Dreams are the aquarium of night.

So thought Gilliatt.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHAIR OF GILD-HOLM-'UR.

ONE might search in vain to-day in the inlet of Houmet for Gilliatt's house, garden, and the creek in which he sheltered the paunch. The Bû de la Rue no longer exists. The little peninsula where stood this house has fallen beneath the picks of the quarrymen, and has been carried away, cartload by cartload, on the vessels of the dealers in rocks and of granite. It has become a quay, a church, and a palace in the capital. That whole crest of reefs has long since been conveyed to London.

These projections of rocks into the sea, with their chasms and crevices, are miniature mountain chains; on looking at them, one receives the same impression that a giant would have from looking at the Cordilleras. The local dialect calls them "Banques." These banks have various shapes. Some resemble a dorsal spine, each rock is a vertebra; others, the skeleton of a fish; others, a crocodile drinking.

At the extremity of the Banque of the Bû de la Rue, there was a great rock which the fishermen of Houmet called the Beast's Horn. This rock, though less lofty, resembled the Pinnacle in Jersey. At high tide, the water separated it from the bank, and the Horn was isolated. At low tide, it could be reached by an isthmus of rocks. The curious feature about this rock was, that on the side toward the sea there was a sort of natural chair, hollowed out by the sea and polished by the rain. This chair was treacherous. One was insensibly attracted thither by the beauty of the view; one paused there "for love of the prospect," as they say in Guernsey; some-

thing detained you there; there is a charm in vast horizons. This chair offered itself to you; it formed a sort of niche in the perpendicular face of the cliff; it was easy to climb into that niche; the sea, which had hewn it out of the rock had also arranged beneath it a sort of staircase of flat stones; the abyss indulges in these attentions of politeness; distrust its politeness; the chair tempted one to ascend thither; there one felt at ease; for seat, the granite worn and rounded by the foam; for arms, two hollows which seemed made expressly; for back, the whole high, vertical wall of the rock above one's head, which one admired without thinking of saying to one's self that it was impossible to scale it; nothing more simple than to forget one's self in this arm-chair; one beheld the whole sea laid before one, one saw in the offing, vessels arriving or departing, one could follow a ship with the eyes until it sank beyond the Casquets, below the curve of the ocean, one marvelled, gazed, enjoyed, one felt the caress of the breeze and the waves; there exists in Cayenne a bat which lulls you to sleep in the shade with a gentle waving of its dusky wings; the wind is this invisible bat; when it is not engaged in ravaging, it is engaged in lulling to sleep. One gazed at the sea, one listened to the wind, or yielded to the drowsiness of ecstasy. When the eyes are filled with an excess of beauty and light, it is luxury to close them. All at once, one roused one's self. It was too late. The sea had risen little by little. The water surrounded the rock.

One was lost.

What a terrible thing was this rock in the rising sea.

The tide rises imperceptibly at first, then violently. On arriving at the rocks, it is seized with anger, it foams. Swimming is not always successful among the breakers. Excellent swimmers have been drowned at the Horn of the Bû de la Rue.

In certain places, at certain hours, gazing at the sea is dangerous. It is what looking at a woman sometimes is.

The very old inhabitants of Guernsey formerly called this

niche fashioned in the rock by the sea, the "Chair Gild-Holm-'Ur," or "*Kidormur*," a Celtic word, it is said, which those who know Celtic do not understand, and which those who know French understand. "*Qui-dort-meurt*" — "he who sleeps, dies." Such is the peasant translation.

Readers are free to choose between this translation, "he who sleeps, dies," and the one given in 1819, I think, in the *Armoricaïn* by M. Athénas. According to this learned Celtic scholar, Gild-Holm-'Ur signifies the "halting-place of flocks of birds."

Another chair of this sort exists at Aurigny, which is called the monk's chair, so well made by the sea and with a projecting point of rock so aptly adjusted that one might say that the sea is so amiable as to place a stool under your feet.

At high water, when the tide was full, the chair of Gild-Holm-'Ur was no longer visible. The water covered it completely.

The chair of Gild-Holm-'Ur was the neighbor of the Bû de la Rue. Gilliatt knew it well and sat in it. He often went there. Did he meditate? No. We have just described it — he dreamed. He did not, however, allow himself to be caught by the tide.



BOOK SECOND.

MESS LETHIERRY.

CHAPTER I.

A RESTLESS LIFE AND A QUIET CONSCIENCE.

MESS LETHIERRY, the notable man of Saint-Sampson, was a redoubtable sailor. He had navigated a great deal. He had been cabin-boy, sailmaker, top-man, helmsman, boatswain's mate, boatswain, pilot, and captain. He was now a ship-owner. No one knew the sea as he did. He was intrepid in assisting ships in distress. In bad weather, he strolled along the strand and watched the horizon.

What is that yonder? Some one is in trouble. It might be a Weymouth lugger, or an Aurigny cutter, a bisquine from Courseulle, the yacht of a lord, an Englishman, a Frenchman, a poor man, a rich man, the devil himself, it mattered not; he sprang into a boat, called two or three brave men or dispensed with them as might be, constituted himself the entire crew, unfastened the moorings, seized the oar, pushed out to sea, mounted, descended, and mounted once again on the rolling waves, plunged into the hurricane, went to meet danger. He could be seen far away in the storm, erect in his boat, dripping with rain, blended with the flashes of lightning, with the face of a lion, and covered with a mane of foam. He sometimes passed his whole day thus in danger, amid the waves, amid the hail, in the wind, lying alongside vessels in distress, saving men, saving cargoes, fighting the tempest. In the evening he returned home and knit a pair of stockings.

This life he had led for fifty years, from the age of ten to that of sixty; so long as he was young. At sixty he perceived that he could no longer lift the great anvil at the forge of Varchin with one arm; this anvil weighed three hundred pounds; and all at once he was made a prisoner by the rheumatism. He was obliged to give up the sea. Then he passed from the heroic to the patriarchal age. He was no longer anything but a worthy man.

His rheumatism came to him about the time when he had gotten into easy circumstances. These two products of labor are fond of keeping one another company. At the moment when one becomes rich, one is paralyzed. This crowns life.

People say to themselves: "Now let us enjoy ourselves."

In islands like Guernsey, the population is composed of men who have passed their lives in making the circuit of their field, and of men who have passed their life in sailing around the world. They constitute two sorts of laborers, the tillers of the soil and the toilers of the sea. Mess Lethierry belonged to the second category, though he knew the land. He had led the hard life of a toiler. He had travelled on the continent: he had been for a while a ship's carpenter at Rocheforte, then at Cette. We have just alluded to the tour of the globe; he had accomplished his tour of France as journeyman carpenter. He had toiled at the apparatus for draining the salt works in Franche Comté. This honest man had led a life of adventure.

In France, he had learned to read, to think, to will. He had done a little of everything, and in everything he had maintained his integrity. At the foundation of his nature, however, he was simply a sailor. The water belonged to him. He was accustomed to say: "The fishes are in my house." In short, his whole existence, with the exception of two or three years, had been devoted to the ocean; "thrown into the water," as he expressed it. He had navigated the great seas, the Atlantic and the Pacific, but he preferred the channel. He was wont to exclaim with affection: "That is the one which is fierce!" He had been born at sea, and there he

wished to die. After having made the circuit of the globe once or twice, and being in a condition to judge, he had returned to Guernsey and had not stirred from thence since. Henceforth, the extent of his voyages was Granville and Saint-Malo.

Mess Lethierry was a Guernsian, that is to say, Norman, that is to say, English, that is to say, French. Within him, this quadruple country was submerged and drowned, as it were, in his greater country, the ocean.

During all his life, and wherever he went, he retained the habits of a Norman fisherman.

This did not prevent his opening some old volume now and then, from taking pleasure in a book, from knowing the names of philosophers and poets, and from jabbering a little in all languages.

CHAPTER II.

A TASTE WHICH HE HAD.

GILLIATT had something of the savage in his nature. Mess Lethierry had similar characteristics.

This savage had, however, certain refinements in his nature. He was fastidious in regard to the hands of women. In his youth, when he was still almost a child, between cabin-boy and sailor, he had heard Admiral de Suffren exclaim: "Yonder is a pretty girl, but what horrible, great, red hands!" The word of an admiral is a command in all matters. Above an oracle there stands an order. The exclamation of the Bailli de Suffren rendered Lethierry dainty and exacting on the point of small, white hands. His own hand, a large, mahogany-colored spatula, was a battle club in lightness, and a pair of pincers for a friendly grasp, and smashed a paving-stone when it fell, clenched, upon it. He had never married. Either the wish or the opportunity had been lacking. The reason may possibly be discovered in the fact that this sailor was inexorable in his demand for hands like a duchess's, and it is rare to find the fisher girls of Portbail with hands like these.

Nevertheless, it was said at Rocheforte en Charente that he had, in earlier days, discovered a coquettish grisette who realized his ideal. She was a pretty girl with pretty hands. She was spiteful and scratched. Woe to any one who attacked her. Capable of being used as claws when required, and exquisitely neat, her nails were without fear and without reproach. These charming nails had first enchanted Lethierry and then disturbed him; and, fearing that the day might come when he should no longer be the master of his

mistress, he decided not to take this love affair before monsieur the mayor.

On another occasion, at Aurigny, a girl pleased him. He was thinking of marriage, when an inhabitant said to him: "I congratulate you, you will have a fine *bouselière* in her." He obtained an explanation of this commendation. At Aurigny, a certain custom prevails. They take a cow-dung and fling it against the wall. When it is dry, it falls, and is used for fuel. These pieces of dried dung are called *coipiaux*. A girl at Aurigny has no chance of being married unless she is a good hand at making these. This talent put Lethierry to flight.

However, he possessed in the matter of love or liason a kind of coarse peasant philosophy, the wisdom of a sailor always captivated, but never enslaved, and he was wont to boast of having been, in his youth, easily conquered by a "*cotillon*." What is now called a crinoline was then called a *cotillon*. This signifies both more and less than a wife.

These rough mariners of the Norman archipelago are gifted with wit. Nearly all of them can read and write. On Sundays, little cabin boys eight years of age may be seen seated on a coil of rope with book in hand. These Norman sailors have always been sarcastic, and have, as the saying goes, made "*mots*." It was one of them, bold pilot Quéripel, who tossed at Montgomery, when he had taken refuge in Jersey after his unlucky lance-thrust at Henri II., this sarcasm: "A mad head hath broken an empty head." It was another, Touzeau, skipper at Saint-Brelade, who made this philosophical pun, wrongly attributed to Archbishop Cannes: "After death, popes become butterflies and sires become mites." *

* Après la mort, les papes deviennent papillons, et les sires deviennent cirons.

CHAPTER III.

THE ANCIENT DIALECT OF THE SEA.

THESE mariners of the Channel Islands are veritable old Gauls. These islands which, at the present day are becoming rapidly anglicized, remained for a long time aboriginal. The peasant of Sark speaks the language of Louis XIV.

Forty years ago, the classic dialect of the sea was to be found in the mouths of the sailors of Jersey and Aurigny. One would have supposed one's self in the midst of the sea life of the seventeenth century. A philological specialist might have gone thither to study the ancient dialect of seaman and of battle shouted by Jean Bart through that speaking trumpet which terrified Admiral Hidde. The maritime vocabulary of our fathers, to-day almost completely changed, was still in use in Guernsey towards 1820.

A vessel which worked well to windward was a "good plyer"; a vessel which veered to the wind almost of itself, in spite of its foresails and its helm, was "an ardent vessel." To get under way was "to take *aire*"; to lie to, was "*capu-fer*"; to make fast the end of a running rope was "*faire dormant*"; to get the weather gage was "*faire chapelle*"; to ride firm at anchor was "*faire teste*"; to be in disorder on board was "*être en pantenne*"; to have the wind in the sails was "*porter-plain*."

Not one of these expressions is any longer in use.

To-day they say, "*bonvoyer*" (to beat to windward), then they said, "*beauvoyer*"; now "*naviguer*" (to sail), then they said, "*naviger*"; they say, "*virer vent devant*" (to tack), they used to say, "*donner vent devant*"; they say "*aller de*

l'avant” (to have headway), they said, “*tailler de l'avant*”; they say, “*tirez d'accord*” (pull together), they used to say, “*halez d'accord*”; they say, “*dérapez*, (trip the anchor), they formerly said, “*déplantez*”; they say, “*embraquez* (haul taut), they said: “*abraquez*”; they say, “*taquets*” (cleats), they said, “*bittons*”; they say, “*burins*,” they said, “*tappes*,”; they say, “*balancines*” (halliards), they said, “*valencines*”; they say “*tribord* (starboard), they said “*stribord*”; they say “*les hommes de quart à bâbord* (the men of the larboard watch), they said, “*les basbourdis*”; Tourville wrote to Hocquincourt, “*nous avons singlé*” (we have sailed), instead of *cinglé*.

Instead of “*la rafale*” (the squall), “*le raffal*”; instead of “*bossoir*” (cat-head) “*boussoir*”; instead of “*drosse*” (tackle), “*dvousse*”; instead of “*loffer*” (luff), “*faire une olofée*”; instead of “*élonger*” (lay alongside), “*alonger*”; instead of “*forte brise*” (stiff breeze), “*survent*”; instead of “*jouail*” (stock), “*jas*”; instead of “*soute* (magazine), “*fosse*.”

Such was the nautical tongue in the Channel Islands, at the beginning of this century.

Ango would have been touched to hear a Jersey pilot speak. While everywhere else sails “*faseyaient*” (shivered), in the Channel Islands they “*barbeyaient*.” A “*saut de vent*” (flaw) was a “*folle-vente*” Nowhere else were two Gothic modes of mooring in use, the “*valture*,” and the “*portugaise*.” Only there could the old commands be heard: “*Tour-et-choque*” (belay and slack); “*Bosse-et-bitte*” (Stopper and bite).

A Granville sailor would say, “*le clan*” (sheavehole), while a sailor of Saint-Aubin or Saint-Sampson still said “*le canal de pouliot*.” What was “*bout d'alonge* (flukes) at Saint Malo, was “*oreille d'âne*” at Saint-Hélier.

Mess Lethierry, precisely like the Duc de Vivonne, called the concave curve of decks, “the shear,” and the caulker’s chisel, “*la patarasse*.”

It was with this uncouth dialect between his teeth that Duquesne beat Ruyter, that Duguay-Trouin beat Wasnaer,

and that Tourville brought the first galley which bombarded Algiers, broadside on, in full daylight, in 1681. To-day it is a dead language. The idiom of the sea is entirely different at the present time. Duperré would not understand Suffren.

The language of signals has been no less transformed ; and it is a long way from the four pennants, red, white, blue and yellow, of La Bourdonnais to the eighteen flags of the present day which, hauled up by twos, by threes and by fours, offer to the necessities of distant communication seventy thousand combinations, are never at a loss, and so to speak, foresee the unforeseen.

CHAPTER IV.

ONE IS VULNERABLE THROUGH WHAT ONE LOVES.

MESS LETHIERRY wore his heart on his hand; a large hand and a great heart. His defect consisted in this admirable quality, — confidence. He had a way peculiar to himself, of entering into an engagement; it was solemn. He said: "I give my word of honor on it to the good God." That said, he went through to the end. He believed in the good God, not in the rest. What little church going he did, was done out of politeness. At sea he was superstitious.

Nevertheless, bad weather had never made him retreat; this was because he was but little accessible to opposition. He no more tolerated it from the ocean than from any one else. He meant to be obeyed; so much the worse for the sea if it resisted; it must take the consequences. Mess Lethierry did not yield.

An angry wave had no more power to stop him than a disputatious neighbor. What he said was said, what he planned was done. He bent neither before objection nor before tempest. *No* did not exist for him; neither in the mouth of a man nor in the thunder of a cloud. He went his way. He did not permit any one to refuse him. Hence his obstinacy in life, and his intrepidity on the ocean.

He liked to season his fish soup, knowing the exact dose of pepper, salt, and herbs which it required, and he took as much pleasure in cooking it as in eating it. A being who is transfigured by a pea jacket, and brutalized by a coat; who resembles, with his hair flying in the breeze, Jean Bart, and, in a round hat, Jocrisse; awkward in the town, strange and for-

midable at sea ; the back of a porter ; no oaths, very rarely wrath, a soft, very gentle tone which becomes thunder through a speaking-trumpet ; a peasant who has read the Encyclopedia ; a Guernsey man who has seen the Revolution ; a very learned ignoramus, no bigotry, but all sorts of visions, more faith in the White Lady than in the Holy Virgin ; the form of Polyphemus ; the logic of the weathervane ; the will of Christopher Columbus ; something of the bull and something of the child in his nature ; a nose almost flat, large cheeks, a mouth with all its teeth perfect, a frown all over his face, a face that looked as though it had been jumbled together by the billows, and on which the compass has turned for forty years, an air of storm on his brow, a carnation of rock in the open sea ; — now add to this a good-tempered smile on that harsh face, and you will have before you Mess Lethierry.

Mess Lethierry had two loves, Durande and Déruchette.

BOOK THIRD.

DURANDE AND DÉRUCHETTE.

CHAPTER I.

CHATTER AND SMOKE.

THE human body might well be regarded as only an appearance. It hides our reality. It lies thick over our light, or our shadow. The reality is our soul. To speak absolutely, the human visage is a mask. The true man is that which is beneath man. If one could perceive that man crouching and hidden behind that illusion which is called the flesh, one would have more than one surprise. The common error consists in taking the external being for the real being. Such and such a maiden, for example, would appear a bird if one could see her as she is.

A bird with the form of a maiden, what more exquisite! Imagine that you have her with you. That would be Déruchette. The delicious creature! One would be tempted to say to her, "Good-day, Mademoiselle Goldfinch." One beholds no wings, but one hears the chirping. Sometimes she sings. By her chatter, she is below man; by her singing, above him. There is mystery in that song; a virgin is the envelope of an angel. When womanhood begins, the angel departs; later on she returns, bringing a little one to the mother. While awaiting life, she who will one day be a mother is for a long time a child, the little girl lingers in the maiden, and is a linnet. One thinks as one looks at her: "How amiable of her not to fly away!" The sweet, familiar being follows its own pleasure

about the house, flits from branch to branch, that is to say, from room to room, enters, goes out, approaches, plumes its feathers or combs its hair, makes all sorts of little gentle noises, murmurs one knows not what ineffable thing in your ears. It questions and is answered; one interrogates it, it chirps in reply. One chatters with it. To chatter refreshes one after serious talk. This being has heaven in it. It is a celestial thought mingled with your black thought. You feel grateful to it for being so light, so fleeting, so fugitive, so intangible, and for having the goodness not to be invisible, when it might, so it seems, be impalpable. Here below, the beautiful is a necessity.

There are on earth few more important functions than this : to be charming. The forest would be in despair without the humming-bird. To scatter joy, to beam with happiness, to possess, amid sombre things an exhalation of light, to be the gilding of destiny, to be harmony, to be grace, to be prettiness, is to render a service. Beauty does one good by being beautiful. This creature has the fairy quality of being an enchantment for all who surround her; sometimes she knows nothing of it herself, and then it is but the more sovereign; her presence lights, her approach warms; she passes by, one is content; she halts, one is happy; to look at her is to love; she is the dawn with a human face; she need do nothing but simply exist there, that suffices; she makes an Eden of the house, it breaks forth from every pore; she communicates this ecstasy to all, without giving herself any other trouble than to breathe beside them. To have a smile which, one knows not how, lightens the weight of the monstrous chain dragged by all living beings in common, is, what would you have me say, — divine.

This smile Déruchette had. We will say more, Déruchette was that smile. There is something which resembles us more than our face, and that is our physiognomy; and there is something which resembles us more than our physiognomy, and that is our smile; Déruchette smiling, was Déruchette.

The Jersey and Guernsey race are peculiarly attractive. The women, especially the young girls, possess a florid and charming beauty. There the Saxon fairness and Norman freshness are combined. Rosy cheeks and blue eyes. The star is lacking in these glances. The English education subdues it. Those limpid eyes will be irresistible whenever the Parisian depth shall appear in them. Paris, happily, has not yet made its entrance into Englishwomen.

Déruchette was not a Parisienne, but neither was she a Guerneseyan. She was born at Saint-Pierre-Port, but Mess Lethierry had brought her up. He had trained her to be a dainty creature; and so she was.

Déruchette had an indolent, and at the same time, an aggressive look, without being aware of it. Perhaps she did not know the meaning of the word love, and she liked to make people fall in love with her. But with no bad intentions. She never dreamed of marriage. The old emigrant gentleman who had taken root in Saint-Sampson said: "That little girl makes powder flirtation."

Déruchette had the prettiest little hands in the world, and feet to match them. She had kindness and sweetness, in all her person; her family and riches were Mess Lethierry, her uncle; her occupation was to enjoy life; her talent, a few songs; her knowledge, beauty; her wit, innocence; her heart, ignorance; she had the graceful repose of the Creole, a mixture of giddiness and vivacity, the teasing gayety of childhood, with an inclination to melancholy; toilets which were rather insular, elegant but incorrect, bonnets with flowers all the year round; an innocent brow, a supple and graceful neck, chestnut hair, a white skin slightly freckled in summer, a large mouth, and on that mouth the adorable and dangerous brightness of a smile. This was Déruchette.

Sometimes in the evening, after sunset, at the moment when night is blending with the sea, at the hour when the twilight lends a sort of terror to the waves, there could be seen entering the channel of Saint-Sampson, on the sinister swell of the

billows, an indescribable shapeless mass, a monstrous silhouette which whistled and spat, a horrible thing which roared like a beast and smoked like a volcano, a sort of hydra on the foam, and dragging after it a fog, and flinging itself towards the city with a frightful beating of paddles and a throat from which spouted flames. This was Durande.

CHAPTER II.

THE ETERNAL HISTORY OF UTOPIA.

A STEAMBOAT was a prodigious novelty in the waters of the channel in 182-. The whole Norman coast was long terrified by it. To-day, ten or twelve steamers crossing each other's course in various directions, on one marine horizon, make no one even lift his eyes ; at the most, they occupy for a moment the special expert who can distinguish by the color of their smoke whether this one burns Welsh coal, and that one, Newcastle coal. They pass, 'tis well. Welcome, if they are arriving ; a prosperous voyage, if they are departing.

People were less calm on the subject of those inventions during the first quarter of this century, and these mechanisms and their smoke were viewed with special disfavor among the islanders of the channel. In this puritan archipelago, where the Queen of England has been blamed for violating the Bible,* because she gave birth while under the influence of chloroform, the first success won by the steamboat was to be christened the Devil-boat. To these good fisher folk, formerly Catholics, now Calvinists, always bigots, it seemed to be hell afloat. A local preacher treated this question : " Have we the right to make fire and water work together, when God has separated them ? " † Did not this beast of fire and iron resemble Leviathan ? Was not this reconstituting, chaos, in the measure possible to human beings ? This is not the first time that progress has been described as a return to chaos.

" Mad idea, gross error, absurdity ; " such had been the verdict of the academy of sciences when consulted by Napoleon at

* Genesis, iii. 16 : In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children.

† Genesis, 1, 4.

the beginning of this century as to the steamboat ; the fishermen of Saint-Sampson are excusable for being in a scientific matter, on a level with the geometricians of Paris, and in the matter of religion, a little island like Guernsey is not compelled to possess more light than a great continent like America. In 1807, when Fulton's first steamboat, commanded by Livingston, provided with Watt's engine sent from England, and managed besides the ordinary crew, by only two Frenchmen, André Michaux and another, when this first steamboat made its first trip from New York to Albany, it chanced to be the seventeenth of August. Thereupon, Methodism took up the word, and in all the chapels the preachers cursed that machine, declaring that *seventeen* was the total of the ten horns and the seven heads of the beast of the Apocalypse. In America, the beast of the Apocalypse was invoked against the steamship ; and in Europe, the beast of Genesis. Therein lay the whole difference.

The wise men had rejected the steamboat as impossible ; the priests, in their turn, rejected it as impious. Science had condemned, religion anathematized. Fulton was a species of Lucifer. The simple folk of shore and country clung to this reprobation because of the discomfort which this novelty gave them. In the presence of the steamboat, the religious point of view was as follows : fire and water are a divorce. This divorce is ordained by God. One should not put asunder what God has joined together ; one must not unite what he has put asunder. The peasants' point of view was this : It frightens me.

Nothing less than Mess Lethierry was required in order to engage in such an undertaking as a steamboat from Guernsey to Saint-Malo at that distant epoch. He alone could conceive it as a freethinker, and realize it as a bold mariner. His French side conceived the idea, his English side executed it.

How it came about we will tell.

CHAPTER III.

RANTAINE.

ABOUT forty years before the period at which the events we are here relating took place, in the suburbs of Paris, near the circumscribing wall, between the Fosse-aux-Lions, and the Tombe Issoire, there stood a suspicious house. It was an isolated hovel, a resort for cut-throats when needful. There, with his wife and his child, dwelt a sort of *bourgeois* ruffian, a former clerk to the procurator of the Châtelet, who had become a thief pure and simple. He figured later on in the Court of Assizes.

This family was named Rantaine.

Two flowered porcelain cups were to be seen on a mahogany chest of drawers in the wretched hovel; on one could be read in gilt letters: "Souvenir of friendship," and on the other: "Token of esteem." The child was in the den, pell-mell with crime. The father and mother having belonged to the *demi-bourgeoisie*, the child was taught to read; he was brought up after a fashion. The mother pale, almost in rags, mechanically "gave an education" to her little one, making him spell, and breaking off to help her husband in some evil desire or to sell herself to a passer-by. Meanwhile, the "Cross of Jesus" remained open on the table at the place where they had stopped, and the child beside it, in thought.

The father and mother, caught in the very act of committing some crime, disappeared in penal obscurity. The child also disappeared.

Lethierry in his wanderings encountered another adventurer like himself, rescued him from some predicament, rendered

him a service, for which he was grateful, took a liking to him, befriended him, brought him to Guernsey, found him intelligent at the coasting business, and made him his partner. This man was little Rantaine grown up.

Rantaine, like Lethierry, had a robust neck, a large and powerful space for carrying burdens between his shoulders, and the loins of the Farnese Hercules. Lethierry and he had the same gait and the same build; Rantaine was the taller of the two. Those who saw their backs as they walked along the port, side by side, said, —

“Yonder are the two brothers.”

From the front it was another matter. All that was open in Lethierry's countenance was reserved and cautious in Rantaine. Rantaine was circumspect, Rantaine was a master of fencing, played the harmonica, snuffed a candle with a bullet at twenty paces, dealt a magnificent blow of the fist, recited verses from *La Henriade*, and interpreted dreams. He knew by heart Treneuil's, “*Les Tombeaux de Saint-Denis*.” He affirmed that he had been connected with the Sultan of Calicut, “whom the Portuguese call the Zamorin.”

If any one could have turned over the little notebook which he carried on his person, one would have found, among other notes, jottings like the following: “At Lyons, in one of the fissures of the wall of one of the dungeons of Saint-Joseph, there is a file hidden.”

He spoke with grave deliberation. He said that he was the son of a chevalier of Saint-Louis. His linen was mismatched and marked with different letters; no one was more sensitive than he on the score of honor; he fought and killed his man, he had something of the mother of an actress in his watchful glance for an insult, strength serving to envelop subtlety — that was Rantaine.

The force of his blow, applied in a fair, upon a “Moor's head,” had forever won the heart of Lethierry.

His adventures were wholly unknown in Guernsey. They were checkered. If destinies have a wardrobe, Rantaine's

destiny must have been clad as a harlequin. He had seen the world and made life. He was a circumnavigator. His trades formed a scale. He had been cook in Madagascar, bird-raiser in Sumatra, a general in Honolulu, an editor of a religious journal in the Gallapagos islands, a poet at Oomrawuttee; a Freemason in Hayti. In this last quality, he had pronounced at Grand-Goâve a funeral oration of which the local journals have preserved this fragment, —

“Farewell then, beautiful soul! In the azure vault of the heavens whither thou now takest thy flight, thou wilt, no doubt, meet good Abbé Léandre Crameau of Petit-Goâve! Tell him that, thanks to ten years of glorious efforts, thou hast completed the church of l’Anse-à-Veaux! Farewell, transcendant genius, model man!”

It will be seen that his Freemason’s mask did not prevent his wearing the false nose of a Catholic. The first won him the good opinion of the men of progress; the second, of the men of order. He declared himself a pure-blooded white. He hated the blacks; nevertheless, he certainly admired Soulouque.

In Bordeaux, in 1815, he had been a royalist (*verdet*). At that epoch, the fumes of his royalism sprang from his brow in the form of an immense white plume. He had passed his life in making eclipses, — appearing, disappearing, reappearing. He was a revolving-light rascal. He knew some Turkish; instead of guillotine, he said “*néboïssè*. He had been a slave in Trepoli to a thaleb, and he had there learned Turkish to an accompaniment of blows; his duties had consisted in going at evening to the doors of the mosques, and there reading aloud before the faithful, the Koran, written on small bits of board, or on the shoulder blades of camels. He was probably a renegade.

He was capable of everything and something worse.

He burst with laughter and frowned at the same time. He said: “In politics I esteem only those men who are inaccessible to influence.” He said: “I advocate morals.” He was

gay and cordial rather than otherwise. The shape of his mouth belied the sense of his words. His nostrils might have passed for the nostrils of a horse. At the corners of his eyes there were cross roads of wrinkles, where all sorts of dark thoughts met together. The secret of his physiognomy could only be deciphered there. His crows'-feet were the talons of a vulture. His skull was low at the top, and broad at the temples. His ears, ill-shapen and encumbered with hairy thickets seemed to say: "Do not speak to the beast which is in this cave."

One fine day, no one at Guernsey knew what had become of Rantaine.

Lethierry's partner had "slipped his cable," leaving the partnership cash box empty.

There was money of Rantaine's in that cash box, no doubt, but there were also fifty thousand francs belonging to Lethierry.

Lethierry, in his business of coaster and ship carpenter, had saved one hundred thousand francs, in the course of forty years of industry and probity. Rantaine had carried off half of it.

Lethierry, half ruined, did not flinch, and cast about instantly for some means to retrieve his fortune. The fortunes of men of spirit may be ruined, but not their courage. People were then beginning to talk about the steamboat. The idea occurred to Lethierry to try Fulton's machine, whose merits were so contested, and to connect the Norman Archipelago and France by steamer. He played his last trump on that idea. He devoted to it the remainder of his fortune. Six months after Rantaine's flight, a vessel with smoke was seen to issue from the stupefied port of Saint-Sampson, which produced the effect of a fire at sea, the first steamer which navigated the channel.

This boat, on which the hatred and contempt of all immediately bestowed the sobriquet of "Lethierry's galiot," was announced to make regular trips from Guernsey to Saint-Malo.

CHAPTER IV.

CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF UTOPIA.

At first, as the reader will of course understand, the thing did not prosper. All the owners of coasters who made the trip to the Isle of Guernsey, from the French side, were loud in their outcries. They denounced this attack on Holy Scripture and their monopoly. The chapels fulminated against it. One reverend gentleman, named Elihu, described the steam-boat as "irreligious." The sailing-vessel was declared orthodox. They distinctly saw the devil's horns on the heads of the oxen which the steamer brought and landed.

This protest lasted for a considerably long time. Nevertheless, little by little, they came to see that the cattle arrived in a less fatigued state, and sold better, that the meat was better, that the risks of the sea were less for men also; that this passage, besides being less costly, was quicker and more sure; that one set out at a fixed hour, and arrived at a fixed hour; that fish, thus travelling more rapidly was fresher, and that they could now pour upon the French markets the surplus of the large catches of fish which are so frequent in Guernsey; that the butter from the admirable Jersey cows made the transit more rapidly in the "Devil-boat" than in the sailing sloops, and no longer lost some of its good quality, so that Dinan called for it, and Saint-Brieuc demanded it, and Rennes wanted it; that there was, in short, thanks to what was called "Lethierry's galiot," security of transit, regularity of communication, a prompt and easy method of going back and forth, an increase of circulation, a multiplication of outlets, extension of commerce, and that, in short, they must make up

their minds to this "Devil-boat," which violated the Bible and enriched the island. Some strong minds ventured to approve in a certain measure. *Sieur Landoys*, the clerk, granted the boat his esteem. Moreover, this was impartiality on his part, for he did not love *Lethierry*; in the first place, because *Lethierry* was *Mess* and he was only *Sieur*. Next, because although registrar at *Saint-Pierre-Port*, *Landoys* was a parishioner of *Saint-Sampson*; now, there were but two men in the parish who had not prejudices, — *Lethierry* and himself; the least that they could do was to detest each other. To belong on board the same ship drives men apart.

Nevertheless, *Sieur Landoys* was honest enough to approve of the steamboat. Others joined *Sieur Landoys*. The affair rose imperceptibly; affairs have their tide; and in course of time, with continued and increasing success, with the evidence of service rendered, the improvement in the general welfare of all being proved, there came a day when, with the exception of a few wiseacres, every one admired "*Lethierry's galiot*."

It would be less admired at the present day. This steamer of forty years ago would made our present constructors smile. This marvel was misshapen, this prodigy was infirm.

There is no less distance between our great transatlantic steamers of the present time, and the boat with wheels and fire with which *Denis Papin* manœuvred on the *Fulde* in 1707, than between the three-decker "*Montebello*" two hundred feet long, fifty wide, with a mainmast one hundred and fifteen feet high, displacing a weight of three thousand tons, carrying eleven hundred men, a hundred and twenty cannon, ten thousand cannon-balls, and a hundred and sixty packets of grape-shot, belching forth on each broadside, when in action, thirty-three hundred pounds of iron, and spreading to the wind, when it sails, five thousand six hundred square metres of canvas, and the Danish gally of the second century, found full of stone axes, bows, and battle clubs, in the marine marshes of *Wester-Satrup*, and deposited in the town hall of *Flensbourg*.

An interval of precisely one hundred years, 1707-1807, separates Papin's first boat from Fulton's first boat. Le-thierry's galiot" was certainly an advance upon those two rough sketches, but it was itself a rough sketch. This did not prevent its being a masterpiece. Every embryo of science presents this double aspect; a monster as a foetus; a marvel as a germ.

CHAPTER V.

THE DEVIL-BOAT.

"LETHIERRY'S GALIOT" was not rigged to the best advantage for sailing, and this was no defect, since it is one of the laws of naval architecture; besides, as the vessel had fire for its motive power, sails were only accessories. Let us add that a side-wheel steamer is scarcely affected by any sails which may be applied to it. The galiot was too short, too round, too squat, it had too much beam, too much quarter; boldness of invention had not been carried so far as to make it light; the galiot had some of the defects, and some of the good qualities of the paunch. She pitched but little, but she rolled a great deal. The paddle-boxes were too high. She had too much beam for her length. The engine was massive and encumbered her, and in order to render the vessel fit for a heavy cargo, they had been obliged to heighten the bulwarks out of all proportion, which gave to the galiot nearly the same defect as the old seventy-fours, a bastard model and which ought to be cut down, in order to render them fit for fighting or sailing. Being short, she should have turned quickly, the time employed in an evolution being in proportion to the length of vessels, but the weight deprived her of the advantage gained by her shortness.

Her midship-frame was too large, which slackened her speed, the resistance of the water being in proportion to the greatest section submerged, and to the square of the speed of the vessel. The stern was vertical, which would not be a fault nowadays, but at that time the invariable custom was to give it a slope of forty-five degrees. All the curves of the

hull were harmonious, but not sufficiently long for the obliquity, and, above all, for the parallelism of the prism of water displaced, which should never be thrown back otherwise than laterally.

In heavy weather, she shipped too much water, sometimes at the bow, sometimes at the stern, which indicated an error in placing the centre of gravity. As the cargo was not where it should have been, owing to the weight of the engine, the centre of gravity often shifted behind the mainmast, and then they were obliged to trust to steam and distrust the mainsail, for the effect of the mainsail in that case was to make the vessel fall off, instead of keeping her near the wind. The remedy was, when they were very near the wind, to let go the main-sheet; in this way the wind was fixed on the bow by the tack jib, and the mainsail no longer produced the effect of a stern sail. This manœuvre was difficult. The helm was the old-fashioned tiller, not a wheel as at the present day, but with a bar, turning on its hinges, fixed in the stern-posts, and moved by a horizontal beam passing above the stern frame.

Two small boats were suspended from the davits. The vessel had four anchors, the sheet anchor, the second anchor, or working anchor, and two small bower anchors. These four anchors, which were bent by chains, were worked, as occasion demanded, by the great capstan at the stern, or the little capstan at the bow.

At that epoch the hydraulic capstan had not yet replaced the intermittent efforts of the handspike. As the vessel had but two bower anchors, one on the starboard and the other on the port, the vessel could not be moored in a tideway which placed it rather at a disadvantage in certain winds. However, in such cases, it could make shift with the second anchor. The buoys were of the ordinary kind, and so constructed as to bear up the weight of the buoy ropes while remaining afloat. The long boat was of useful dimensions; it was the main dependence of the vessel, and was large enough to raise the sheet anchor.

One novelty in this vessel was that it was partly rigged with chains, which deprived the running ropes of none of their freedom of movement nor the standing rigging of its tension. The masts, though of secondary importance, were well proportioned; the top-rigging, drawn taut, looked light. The timbers were solid but coarse, since steam does not require so much delicacy of wood as canvas. This boat had a speed of two leagues an hour. When lying-to, she rode well. Such as she was, "Lethierry's galiot" was a good sea boat, but she lacked sharpness wherewith to cut the water, and one could not say that she worked easily. One felt that in danger, on a reef, or in a waterspout, she would be hard to handle. She creaked like a misshapen thing. As she rolled on the waves, she made a noise like that of a new shoe.

This vessel was above all things a carrier, and like all vessels fitted out for commerce rather than for war, was designed exclusively for the stowage of cargo. She accommodated but few passengers. The transportation of cattle rendered stowage difficult and very peculiar. Cattle were then stowed in the hold, which was another complication. At the present time they are carried on the forward deck. The paddle boxes of Lethierry's Devil-boat were painted white, the hull, to the water line, red, and all the rest of the vessel black, in accordance with the ugly fashion of this century.

When empty, she drew seven feet of water, and when loaded, fourteen.

The engine was powerful. The power was one horse for every three tons burden, which is nearly equal to that of a tug-boat. The paddles were well placed, a little ahead of the vessel's centre of gravity. The engine had a maximum pressure of two atmospheres. It consumed a great deal of coal, though it was a condensing and expanding engine. It had no fly-wheel, owing to the instability of its point of support, and this was remedied, as at the present day, by a double apparatus which caused two cranks fixed at the extremities of the shaft to alternate, and were so arranged that one was always

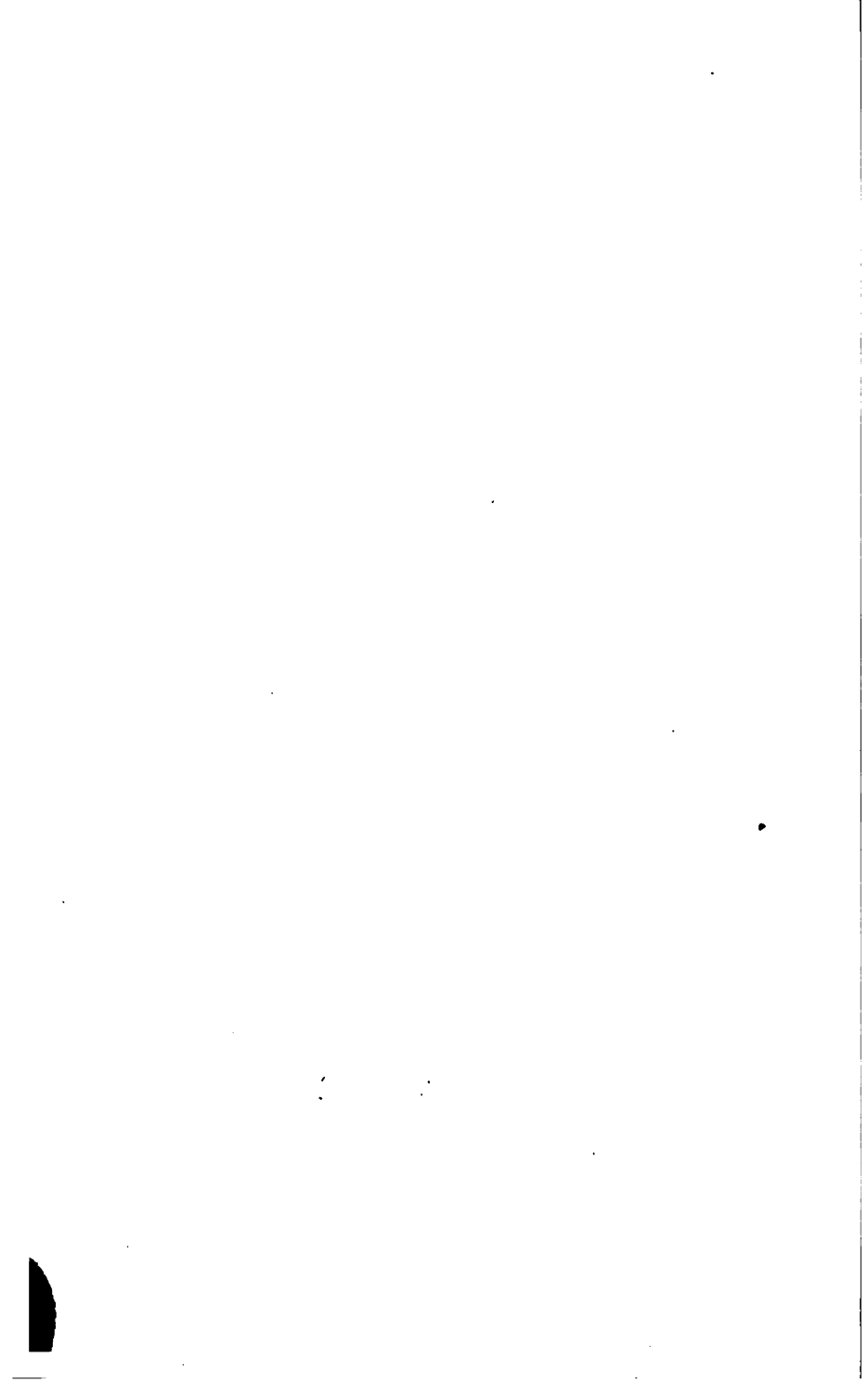
at right angle or quarter turn, while the other was at its dead centre. The whole engine rested on a single cast-iron plate; so that, even in the case of serious injury, no blow of the waves could deprive it of its equilibrium, and the hull, crushed out of shape, could not put the engine out of order. To render the engine still more solid, the principal connecting-rod had been placed near the cylinder, which transferred the centre of oscillation from the middle to the end of the walking beam. Since then, oscillating cylinders have been invented which do away with connecting-rods; but at that epoch, the connecting-rod near the cylinder seemed the final word in machinery. The boiler was divided by partitions, and provided with a brine pump. The paddles were very large, which diminished the loss of power, and the smoke-stack was very tall, which increased the draught of the furnace; but the size of the wheels exposed them to the waves, and the height of the stack offered resistance to the wind. Wooden floats, iron hooks, cramps, cast-iron hubs, such were the paddle wheels, well constructed and, surprising to say, capable of being taken apart. There were always three floats submerged. The speed of the centre of the floats only exceeded by one-sixth, the speed of the vessel; therein lay the defect in the wheels.

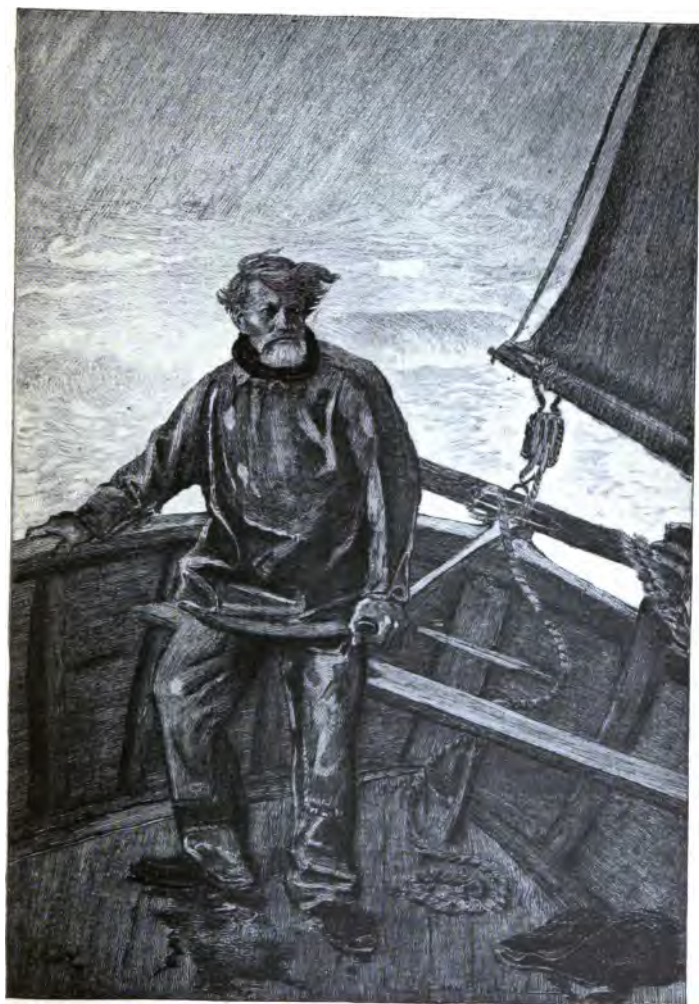
Moreover, the end of the cranks was too long, and the slide-valve distributed the steam in the cylinder with too much friction. At that period, this engine seemed and was admirable.

This engine had been made in France, at the foundry of Bercy. Mess Lethierry had devised it himself, to some extent; the mechanic who had built it on his model was dead; so that this engine was unique and it was impossible to replace it. The designer remained, but the builder was gone.

The engine cost forty thousand francs.

Lethierry himself had made the galiot under the great covered ship shed which stands beside the first tower between Saint-Pierre-Port and Saint-Sampson. He had gone to Bremen





to buy the timber. On this structure, he had exhausted all his knowledge as a ship's carpenter, and his talent was to be recognized in the planking, whose seams were narrow and even, and covered with sarangousti, an Indian mastic which is better than pitch.

The sheathing was well fastened. Lethierry smeared the keel with galgal.

In order to correct the curve of the hull he had adjusted the jib-boom to the bowsprit, which allowed him to add a flying-jib to the jib. On the day when it was launched, he said: "There, I am afloat."

The galiot was, in fact, a success, as the reader has seen.

Accidentally or intentionally, it was launched on the fourteenth of July. On that day, Lethierry standing on the deck between the two paddle boxes, gazed intently at the sea and exclaimed: "'Tis thy turn! The Parisians took the Bas-tille; now we take thee!"

"Lethierry's galiot" made the trip from Guernsey to Saint-Malo once a week. She set out on Tuesday morning and returned on Friday evening, the eve of market day, which is Saturday. It was of much larger tonnage than the largest coasting sloops in all the archipelago, and its capacity being in proportion to its dimensions, a single one of these voyages was equal, for the voyage out and return, to four voyages of an ordinary cutter. Hence, decided advantages.

The reputation of a vessel depends on its stowage, and Lethierry was a good stevedore. When he could no longer work on the sea himself, he trained a sailor to take his place as a stower of the cargo. At the end of two years, the steamer brought in a net income of seven hundred and fifty pounds sterling a year; that is to say, eighteen thousand francs. The pound sterling of Guernsey is worth twenty-four francs; that of England, twenty-five; and that of Jersey; twenty-six. This trifling difference is less trifling than it appears; the banks find a profit in it.

Lethierry standing on the deck.

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CHAPTER VI.

ENTRANCE OF LETHIERRY INTO GLORY.

THE galiot prospered. Mess Lethierry beheld the moment drawing near when he would become monsieur. At Guernsey one does not become monsieur at one bound. Between the man and the gentleman there is a whole ladder to be climbed; to begin with, first rung, the name, alone, Pierre, I will assume it to be; next, second rung, Vésin (neighbor) Pierre; next, third rung, Father Pierre; then fourth rung, Sieur Pierre; next, fifth rung, Mess Pierre; then, at the top, Monsieur Pierre.

This ladder which starts from the ground, continues into the blue sky. The whole hierarchy of England enters into it, and is graded in it. Here are the rungs, ever more and more luminous; above the gentleman there is the esquire, above the esquire, the knight ("sir"); then, still ascending, the baronet (a hereditary "sir"); then the lord, "laird" in Scotland; then the baron, then the viscount, then the earl ("jarl" in Norway), then the marquis, then the duke, then the peer of England, then the prince of the blood royal, then the king. This ladder rises from the people to the middle classes (*bourgeoisie*), from the middle classes to the baronetage, from the baronetage to the peerage, from the peerage to royalty.

Thanks to his rash but successful deed, thanks to steam, thanks to his engine, thanks to the Devil-boat, Mess Lethierry had become a personage. In order to construct the galiot he had been obliged to borrow money; he had run into debt in Bremen, he had run into debt at Saint-Malo; but each year he diminished his indebtedness.

He had purchased in addition, on credit, at the very entrance to the port of Saint-Sampson, a pretty stone house, perfectly new, situated between the sea and a garden, on whose corner this name was to be read: "les Bravées." The mansion of les Bravées, whose front formed a part of the very wall of the port, was remarkable for a double row of windows opening on the north on an enclosure full of flowers, on the south towards the ocean; so that the house had two fronts, one towards tempests, the other towards roses.

These fronts seemed made expressly for the two inhabitants, Mess Lethierry and Miss Déruchette.

The house of les Bravées was popular in Saint-Sampson. for Mess Lethierry had at length become popular. This popularity sprang a little from his kindness, his devotion, his courage, a little from the quantity of men whom he had saved, in great part from his successs, and because he had given to the port of Saint-Sampson the privilege of the arrival and departure of the steamboat.

On perceiving that the Devil-boat was a decidedly good thing, Saint-Pierre, the capital, had claimed it for its port, but Lethierry had stood firm for Saint-Sampson. It was his birthplace, — "That is where I was launched," he was wont to say. — Hence a lively local popularity. His quality of a tax-paying proprietor constituted him what is called in Guernsey, a "habitant." He had been appointed douzenier.* This poor sailor had climbed five out of the six rounds of the social ladder of Guernsey; he was mess; he was on the brink of monsieur, and who knows whether he would not even succeed in passing the boundary to monsieur? Who knows whether one day, they would not read in the Almanac of Guernsey, in the chapter "Gentry and Nobility," this superb and unprecedented inscription: "Lethierry, Esq"?

But Mess Lethierry disdained or rather ignored the side of things which produce vanity. He felt himself to be useful;

* Douzenier, a member of the administrative council in Jersey and Aurigny.

therein lay his joy. Being popular touched him less than being necessary. As we have said, he had but two loves, and consequently but two ambitions, Durande and Déruchette.

At all events, he had invested in the lottery of the sea and had won the grand prize.

This grand prize was the Durande, afloat and sailing.

CHAPTER VII

THE SAME GODFATHER AND THE SAME PROTECTRESS.

AFTER creating this steamer, Lethierry had christened it. He had named it Durande,—La Durande; we shall never call it otherwise. We must also be permitted, typographical usage to the contrary, notwithstanding, not to italicize this name Durande, in this, conforming to the thought of Mess Lethierry, for whom the Durande was almost a person.

Durande and Déruchette are the same name. Déruchette is the diminutive. This diminutive is very much used in the west of France.

Saints in country places often bear their name with all its diminutives and all its augmentatives. One would suppose that there were many persons, where there is in reality but one. This identity of patron saints, male and female, under different names, is not of rare occurrence. Lise, Lisette, Lisa, Elisa, Isabelle, Lisbeth, Betsy,—the whole multitude represent Elisabeth. It is probable that Mahout, Maclon, Malo, and Magloire are the same saint. However, we do not insist on this point.

Sainte-Durande is a saint of Angoumois and Charente. Is she authentic? is a question for the Bollandists. Correct or not, she is the patron saint of numerous chapels.

Lethierry, being at Rochefort when a young sailor, had made the acquaintance of this saint, probably in the person of some pretty Charente maid, perhaps the grisette with the handsome nails. He had retained a sufficient recollection of her to bestow this name on the two things which he loved: Durande on the galliot, Déruchette on the girl.

He was the father of the one, and the uncle of the other.

Déruchette was the daughter of his deceased brother. She had no longer either father or mother. He had adopted her. He took the place of father and mother.

Déruchette was not only his niece, she was his god-daughter as well. It was he who had held her over the baptismal font. It was he who had found her that patroness, Sainte-Durande, and that Christian name, Déruchette.

Déruchette had been born, as we have said, at Saint-Pierre-Port. Her name was inscribed at its proper date, on the parish register.

As long as the niece was a child, and as long as the uncle was poor, no one paid any heed to that appellation, "Déruchette"; but when the little girl became a Miss, and when the sailor became a gentleman, "Déruchette" shocked people. They were astonished at it. They asked Mess Lethierry: "Why Déruchette?"

He replied, "That's the way the name is." They made many attempts to have it changed, He did not lend his countenance to this.

One day a fine lady belonging to the "high life" of Saint-Sampson, the wife of a retired wealthy blacksmith, said to Mess Lethierry, —

"Henceforth, I shall call your daughter, 'Nancy.'"

"Why not Lons-le-Saulnier?" said he.

The fine lady did not yield her point, and said to him on the following day: — "I have found a pretty name for your daughter, — 'Marianne.'"

"A pretty name in sooth," replied Mess Lethierry, "but composed of two villanous beasts, — a husband (*marî*), and an ass (*âne*)."

He stuck to Déruchette.

The reader will be mistaken if he concludes from the above remark that Mess Lethierry did not wish to give his niece in marriage. He did wish to marry her off, certainly, but after his own fashion; he meant her to have a husband after his

own sort, who should work much while she did but little. He liked black hands on a man and white hands on a woman. In order that Déruchette might not spoil her pretty hands, he had directed her to the ways of a young lady. He had given her a music master, a piano, a little library, and also a little thread and some needles in a work-basket. She read more than she sewed, and was more of a musician than a reader. This was what Mess Lethierry wished for her to be. Charming, that was all that he desired. He had brought her up to be a flower rather than a woman. Any one who has studied sailors will understand this. Roughness loves delicacy. In order that the niece might realize the uncle's ideal, it was requisite that she should be rich. Mess Lethierry meant that she should be. His big steamboat was toiling to that end. He had charged Durande with providing Déruchette's dowry.

CHAPTER VIII.

"BONNY DUNDEE."

DÉRUCHETTE occupied the prettiest chamber of les Bravées, with two windows, furnished in veined mahogany, adorned with a bed, whose curtains were checkered green and white, and having a view of the garden and of the lofty hill on which stands the château of le Valle. It was on the other side of this hill that the Bû de la Rue was situated.

In this chamber, Déruchette had her music and her piano. She accompanied herself on this piano when singing her favorite air, the melancholy Scotch melody, "Bonny Dundee"; all of evening lies in that air, all of the dawn lay in her voice; this formed a pleasantly surprising contrast; people said: "Miss Déruchette is at her piano"; and the passers-by at the foot of the hill sometimes paused before the garden wall of the Bravées, to listen to the fresh singing and the sad ballad.

Déruchette was joy itself going and coming in the house. She created a perpetual springtime there. She was beautiful, but more pretty than beautiful, and more graceful than pretty. She reminded the good old pilots, Mess Lethierry's friends, of that princess in a ballad of soldiers and sailors who was so beautiful "that she passed for such in the regiment." Mess Lethierry said, "She has a cable of hair."

She had been of remarkable beauty from her very infancy. They had long feared for her nose, but the little girl, probably determined to be pretty, had held her own; her growth had played her no ill turn; her nose had grown neither too long nor too short; as she grew up she remained charming.

She never called her uncle anything but "father."

He tolerated in her some gardening and housekeeping talents. She herself watered her beds of hollyhocks, purple foxgloves, perennial phlox, and scarlet bennet; she cultivated pink crépis and pink oxalis. She took advantage of the climate of that Island of Guernsey, which is so hospitable to flowers. Like every one else, she had aloes in open ground, and, what is more difficult, she was successful with Nepaul cinquefoil. Her little kitchen garden was skilfully arranged; she made spinach follow radishes, and peas succeed spinach; she knew how to plant Dutch cauliflower and Brussels sprouts, which she transplanted in July, and turnips for August, curled chiccory for September, round parsnips for the autumn, and rampion for winter. Mess Lethierry allowed her to pursue her course, provided that she did not use the spade and rake too much herself, and, above all, that she did not personally apply the dressing.

He had given her two servants, named, the one, Grâce, and the other, Douce, which are two Guernsey names. Grâce and Douce did the work of the house and garden, and they had a right to red hands.

As for Mess Lethierry, he had for a chamber a little den looking on the port, and adjoining the large room on the ground floor, where the entrance door was situated, and where all the various staircases of the house ended. His chamber was furnished with his hammock, his chronometer, and his pipe. There was also a table and a chair. The rafted ceiling had been whitewashed, as well as the four walls. On the right of the door was nailed the Archipelago of the Channel Islands, a fine marine chart, bearing this inscription: "W. Faden, 5 Charing Cross, Geographer to His Majesty;" and on the right, other nails held outspread on the wall one of those huge cotton handkerchiefs on which are figured in colors the signals of all the navies on the globe, having at the four corners the standards of France, Russia, Spain, and the United States of America, and in the centre the English Union Jack.

Douce and Grâce were two creatures of a certain kind, in

the good sense of the word. Douce was not ill-disposed, and Grâce was not ugly. These dangerous names had not turned out badly. Douce, unmarried, had a "gallant." In the Channel Islands this word is in use, the thing also. These two maids had what may be called the creole style of service, a sort of slowness peculiar to Norman domesticity in the archipelago. Grâce, coquettish and pretty, gazed incessantly at the horizon with the uneasiness of a cat. This was caused by the fact, that having, like Douce, a gallant, she had also, so it was said, a sailor husband whose return she feared. But that does not concern us.

The contrast between Grâce and Douce is, that in a less austere and less innocent household, Douce would have remained the servant, while Grâce would have become the lady's maid. Grâce's possible talents were wasted with a candid girl like Déruchette. Besides, the love affairs of Douce and Grâce were latent. Nothing reached Mess Lethierry in regard to them, and nothing of them was reflected on Déruchette.

The room on the ground floor, a hall with a fireplace, surrounded by tables and chairs had, in the last century served as a place of assembly for a conventicle of French Protestant refugees. The bare stone wall had, for its sole luxury, a frame of black wood, wherein was outstretched a placard of parchment ornamented with the feats of Bénigne Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux. Some of the poor diocesans of that eagle, persecuted by him at the time of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and who had taken shelter in Guernsey, had affixed this frame to the wall to bear it witness. There one could read, if one succeeded in deciphering a heavy writing and yellow ink, such little known facts as the following, —

"Oct. 29, 1685, demolition of the temples of Morcef and of Nanteuil, demanded of the king by M. the Bishop of Meaux."

"April 2, 1686, arrest of Cochard, father and son, for their religion, at the request of M. the Bishop of Meaux. Released; the Cochards having abjured."

"Oct. 28, 1699, M. the Bishop of Meaux sends to Ponchartrain a petition of remonstrance that it will be necessary to place the demoiselles de Chalardes and de Neuville, who are of the reformed religion, in the house of the new Catholics of Paris."

"July 7. 1703, was executed the order requested of the king by M. the Bishop of Meaux, to cause to be shut up in the hospital a certain Baudoin and his wife, "bad Catholics of Fublaines."

At the end of the room, near the door of Mess Lethierry's chamber, a little niche of boards which had formed the Huguenot pulpit had become, thanks to a grating with an aperture, the "office" of the steamer; that is to say, the office of the Durande, kept by Mess Lethierry in person. On the old oak pulpit, a register, with its pages lettered debit and credit, replaced the Bible.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MAN WHO HAD SEEN THROUGH RANTAINÉ.

As long as Mess Lethierry had been able to navigate, he had run the *Durande* himself, and he had had no other pilot, no other captain than himself; but the hour had come, as we have already said, when Mess Lethierry had been obliged to find a substitute. For this he had chosen *Sieur Clubin*, of *Torteval*, a silent man. *Sieur Clubin* enjoyed along the whole coast a name for severe probity. He was the *alter ego*, the double of Mess Lethierry.

Sieur Clubin, though he had the air of a notary rather than of a sailor, was a skilful and capable mariner. He possessed all the talents which risk, perpetually undergoing transformations, demands. He was a clever stower of cargo, a handy man aloft, a careful and able boatswain, a robust helmsman, an experienced pilot, and a bold captain. He was prudent, and he sometimes pushed prudence even to daring, which is a great quality at sea. His fear of the probable was tempered by his instinct of the possible. He was one of those mariners who face danger in a proportion known to themselves, and who know how to extract success from every adventure. All the certitude which the sea can leave a man he had. *Sieur Clubin* was, in addition, a renowned swimmer; he belonged to that race of men inured to the gymnastics of the billows who remain in the water as long as desired, who, at *Jersey*, set out from *Havre-des-Pas*, turn the *Cotelette*, make the tour of the *Hermitage* and of *Château Elizabeth*, and return to their starting point at the expiration of two hours. He came from *Torteval*, and he was reputed to have often made the

dreaded passage, swimming, from the Hanois to the point of Plainmont.

One of the things which had most commended *Sieur Clubin* to *Mess Lethierry* was that, knowing or seeing through *Rantaine*, he had pointed out the man's lack of probity to him, and had said to him: "*Rantaine* will rob you." This had been verified. More than once, in unimportant matters it is true, *Mess Lethierry* had put the probity of *Sieur Clubin*, pushed even to scruple, to the proof, and he confided much of his business to him. *Mess Lethierry* said: "All conscience deserves all confidence."

CHAPTER X.

TALES OF LONG VOYAGES.

Mess LETHIERRY, for the sake of his own ease, always wore his sea clothes and his tarpaulin overcoat, rather than his pilot jacket. This made Déruchette's little nose wrinkle. Nothing is so pretty as a pouting beauty. She scolded and laughed. "Good father," she cried, "phew! you smell of tar!" And she gave him a little tap on his big shoulder.

This good old hero of the sea had brought back surprising tales from his voyages.

He had seen in Madagascar, bird's feathers, three of which sufficed to form the roof of a house.

He had seen in India, stalks of sorrel nine feet high.

He had seen in New Holland, flocks of turkeys and geese led and guarded by a shepherd dog which is a bird, and which is called the agami.

He had seen cemeteries of elephants.

In Africa, he had seen gorillas, a sort of man-tiger, seven feet in height. He knew the ways of all monkeys, from the savage baboon, which he called the *macaco bravo*, to the howling baboon, which he called the *macaco barbado*.

In Chili, he had seen a monkey soften the hunters by showing them her little one.

In California, he had seen the trunk of a hollow tree which had fallen on the ground, in whose interior a man on horseback could ride fifty paces.

In Morocco, he had seen the Mozabites and the Biskris fight with matraks and bars of iron; the Biskris because they had

been treated as *kelb*, that is to say, as dogs, the Mozabites because of having been treated as *khamisi*, which means people of the fifth sect.

In China, he had seen the pirate Chanh-thong-quan-lark-Quoi chopped into little pieces for having assassinated the ap of a village.

At Thudan-mot, he had seen a lion carry off an old woman from the midst of a market in a village.

He had been present at the arrival of a great serpent, coming from Canton to Saigon, to celebrate in the pagoda of Cholen the festival of Quan-nam, goddess of navigators. He had contemplated among the Moï the grand Quan-Sû.

At Rio Janeiro, he had seen Brazilian ladies place in their hair little spheres of gauze, each containing a *vagalumes*, a beautiful phosphorescent fly, so that they had a headdress of stars.

He had fought ant hills in Uruguay, and spiders in Paraguay, hairy and as large as a child's head, covering with their claws a diameter of a third of a yard, and attacking man, against whom they launch their hairs, which sink into the flesh like darts, and there raise swellings.

On the river Arinos, an affluent of the Tocantins, in the virgin forests to the north of Diamantina, he had verified the existence of the terrible bat people, the murcilagos, men who are born with white hair and red eyes, dwell in the gloom of the woods, sleep by day, wake by night, and fish and hunt in the dark, seeing better when there is no moon.

Near Bayreuth, in the camp of an expedition of which he was a member, a pluviometer having been stolen from a tent, a sorcerer clad in two or three narrow strips of leather, and resembling a man dressed in his suspenders, had rung a bell attached to the tip of a horn so furiously that a hyæna had come and brought back the pluviometer. This hyæna was the thief.

These true stories resembled fairy tales so closely that they amused Déruchette.

The "doll" of the *Durande* was the bond between the boat and the girl. In the Norman isles, the figure-head carved at the prow, a statue of wood almost sculptured, is called the "doll." Hence, the local position for "navigating" is: "to be between poop and *poupée*" (doll).

The "doll" of the *Durande* was particularly dear to Mess Lethierry.

He had ordered the carver to make it like *Déruchette*. It bore as little resemblance to her as if it had been done with an axe. It was a log of wood trying to be a pretty girl.

This unshapely block was an object of illusion to Mess Lethierry. He contemplated it with the faith of a believer. His faith was complete in the presence of this figure. He recognized *Déruchette* in it perfectly. It is a little the way in which the dogma resembles truth; and the idol, deity.

Mess Lethierry had two great joys every week; one joy on Tuesday, the other on Friday. The first joy consisted in seeing the *Durande* take her departure; the second joy in seeing her return. He leaned on his elbows at his window, gazed upon his work and was happy. There is something of this in Genesis. *Et vidit quod esset bonum*, — and he saw that it was good. On Friday, the presence of Mess Lethierry, at his window, was equivalent to a signal. When people beheld him lighting his pipe at the casement of les Bravées, they said, "Ah! the steamboat is on the horizon." One kind of smoke announced the other.

The *Durande*, on entering port, made her cables fast to a large iron ring, under Mess Lethierry's windows, fixed in the base of the Bravées. On these nights, Lethierry enjoyed an admirable sleep in his hammock, conscious that *Déruchette* was asleep on one side of him, and the *Durande* anchored on the other.

The anchorage of the *Durande* was close to the bell of the port. There was a small bit of the quay there in front of the Bravées.

This quay, the Bravées, the house, the garden, the tiny

streets bordered with hedges, the greater part of the surrounding houses even, do not exist at the present day. The trade in Guernsey granite has caused these lands to be sold. This whole place is occupied at the present moment by the sheds of stonecutters.

CHAPTER XI.

A GLANCE AT POSSIBLE HUSBANDS.

DERUCHETTE grew up, and was not yet married.

Mess Lethierry, in making of her a girl with white hands, had also rendered her somewhat difficult to suit. Such educations turn against you later on.

Besides, he was still more fastidious himself. The husband whom he imagined for Déruchette was also something of a husband for Durande. He would have liked to provide for his two daughters at the same time. He would have liked to have the commander of one, the pilot of the other.

What is a husband ? ”

He is the captain on the voyage of matrimony. Why not the same skipper for girl and boat ? A household obeys the tides. He who knows how to handle a bark knows how to guide a woman. Both are subjects of the moon and the wind.

As Sieur Clubin was only fifteen years younger than Mess Lethierry, he could be for Durande only a temporary skipper ; a young pilot was needed, a permanent captain, a true successor to the founder, the inventor, the creator. The definitive pilot of Durande would be in some measure the son-in-law of Mess Lethierry. Why not blend the two sons-in-law in one ? He cherished this idea. He also beheld a lover appear in his dreams. A powerful topman, sunburned and tawny, an athlete of the sea, that was his ideal. It was not, however, exactly that of Déruchette. She had a more rosy dream.

At all events, uncle and niece seemed to be agreed that there was no haste. When people had come to regard Déruchette as a probable heiress, throngs of suitors had presented

themselves. Such eagerness is not always of good quality. Mess Lethierry felt it. He growled, "a girl of gold, a suitor of brass." And he dismissed the applicants. He waited, so did she.

One singular thing was that he did not set much store by the aristocracy. On that point, Mess Lethierry was not altogether an Englishman. One would find it difficult to believe that he had refused for Déruchette a Ganduel, of Jersey, a Bugnet-Nicolin of Sark. People do not hesitate to affirm, though we doubt the possibility of this, that he had not accepted overtures coming from the aristocracy of Aurigny, and that he had declined the propositions of a member of the family of Edou, which is evidently descended from Édouard the Confessor.

CHAPTER XII.

AN EXCEPTION IN THE CHARACTER OF LETHIERRY.

MESS LETHIERRY had one defect — a great one. He hated a priest; not as an individual, but as an institution. One day, as he was reading — for he sometimes read — Voltaire, — for he now and then read Voltaire, — these words, “Priests are cats,” he laid down the book, and was heard to mutter in a low tone, “I feel that I am a dog.”

It must be remembered that the priests, Lutherans and Calvinists as well as Catholics, had vigorously combated and persecuted him in the creation of his local Devil-boat.

To be a revolutionist in navigation, to try to adopt a spirit of progress to the Norman archipelago, to make the poor little island of Guernsey undergo the first trial of a new invention, was damnable temerity, and we have not concealed the fact. Hence, they had condemned him loudly. Let it not be forgotten that we are speaking here of the ancient clergy, very different men from the present clergy, who, in almost all the local churches, have a liberal tendency towards progress. They had interfered with Lethierry; the total amount of obstacle which could be contained in sermons and preachings had been opposed to him. Detested by the churchmen, he detested them. Their hatred of him was the extenuating circumstance of his towards them.

But, let us state, his aversion for priests was a peculiarity of his nature. There was no necessity for his hating them or being hated by them. As he had said, he was the dog among these cats. He was against them in idea, and what is more unconquerable, by instinct. He felt their secret claws, and he

showed his teeth. Somewhat at haphazard, we must admit, and not always appropriately. Not to make distinctions is a mistake. There is no good hatred in the mass. The Savoyard vicar would have found no mercy in his sight. It is not certain that such a thing as a good priest was possible in Mess Lethierry's eyes. By virtue of being a philosopher, he lacked somewhat in wisdom. The intolerance of the tolerant exists, as well as the rage of the moderates. But Lethierry was so kindly by nature that he could not be really a good hater. He repulsed, rather than attacked. He kept the churchmen at a distance. They had done him harm, he confined himself to not wishing them well. The shade of difference between their hatred and his lay in the fact that theirs was animosity, and his was antipathy.

Guernsey, small as is the island, has room for two religions. It contains the Catholic religion and the Protestant religion. Let us add that it does not place the two religions in the same church. Each form of worship has its own temple or chapel. In Germany, at Heidelberg, for instance, they do not stand so much on ceremony; they cut the church in two, one half for Saint Peter, the other half for Calvin; between the two a partition to prevent fisticuffs; equal shares to each; the Catholics have three altars, the Huguenots have three altars; as the hours for service are the same, the single bell rings for both at once. It summons at the same time to God and the devil, a very simple arrangement. The phlegmatic German accommodates himself to these customs. But at Guernsey each religion has a home of its own. There is the orthodox parish, and there is the heretic parish. One may choose between them. Neither the one nor the other, — such had been the choice of Mess Lethierry.

This sailor, this workman, this philosopher, this upstart of labor, while very simple in appearance, was by no means simple at bottom. He had his contradictions and his obstinacies. As to the priest, he was not to be shaken. He could have given points to Montlosier.

He permitted himself to indulge in very disrespectful raileries. He said things peculiar to himself, eccentric, but sensible. Going to confession he called, "combing one's conscience." The small knowledge of letters which he possessed, a certain amount of reading picked up at sea between squalls, was impaired by faults of spelling. He had also faults of pronunciation, but they were always naive. When peace was made by Waterloo, between the France of Louis XVIII. and the England of Wellington, Mess Lethierry said: "Bourmont has been the traitor of union between the two camps."* Once, he wrote *papauté*, pape ôté.†

We do not think that this was done intentionally.

His antipapacy did not conciliate the Anglicans in his behalf. He was no more beloved by the Protestant rectors than by the Catholic curés. In the presence of the gravest dogmas, his irreligion burst forth almost without restraint. Chance having led him to hear a sermon on hell by the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode, a magnificent sermon filled from one end to the other with sacred texts proving eternal pains, punishment, torments, damnations, inexorable chastisements, endless burnings, inextinguishable curses, the wrath of the Omnipotent, celestial furies, divine vengeance, incontestable facts, he was heard to say gently, as he was coming out with one of the faithful: "You see I have such a queer idea, I imagine that God is good."

This leaven of atheism came from his residence in France.

Although a Guernsey man, and of tolerably pure race, he was called "the Frenchman," in the island, because of his improper mind. He made no secret of the fact that he was impregnated with subversive ideas. His persistence in constructing that steamer, that Devil-boat, had proved it. He said: "I was suckled by '89." That is not a good sort of milk.

Moreover, he was guilty of inconsistencies. It is very difficult to remain by one's self in small countries. In France to

* *Traître d'union*, instead of *trait d'union*, point of union, hyphen.

† Papacy; pope taken away.

keep up appearances, and in England to be respectable—a peaceable life is to be had only at this price. Being respectable implies a multitude of observances, from Sunday well sanctified, to a cravat properly tied. “Don’t get yourself pointed at,” that is the terrible law. To be pointed at is the diminutive of the anathema. Little towns, hotbeds of gossips, excel in this isolating malignity, which is a curse viewed through the small end of the telescope. The most valiant fear this ordeal. A man faces grapeshot, he faces the hurricane, but beats a retreat before Madame Pimbêche.

Mess Lethierry was more tenacious than logical, but beneath this pressure even his obstinacy gave way. He “put water in his wine”—another phrase full of latent concessions and sometimes of such as cannot be acknowledged. He held aloof from members of the clergy, but he did not close his door resolutely against them. On official occasions, and at the stated times for pastoral visits, he received in a proper manner the Lutheran rector or the Papist chaplain, whichever it might be.

At distant intervals, he accompanied Déruchette to the Anglican parish church, while the latter, as we have said, only went herself on the four great festivals of the year.

In short, these compromises, which cost him an effort, irritated him, and, far from inclining him towards churchmen, increased his inward resistance. He indemnified himself by more raillery. This man, being devoid of bitterness, had no acidity in his nature, except in that direction. There was, however, no way of amending him.

In fact and absolutely, such was his temperament, and people had to accept it.

All the clergy were distasteful to him. He possessed the irreverence of the revolution. He made little distinction in the form of worship. He did not even do justice to this great progress of ideas: the cessation of belief in the real presence. His shortsightedness in these matters went so far that he could not see any difference between a minister and an abbé. He confounded a reverend doctor with a reverend father. He

said: "Wesley is no better than Loyola." When he saw a pastor go by with his wife, he turned aside. "Married priest!" he said, with the absurd accent which those two words had in France at that time. He was wont to relate that, on his last trip to London, he had seen "the bishopess of London." His disgust at this sort of union went as far as anger. "Gown and gown cannot wed," he cried. The priesthood, in his eyes, was equivalent to a distinct sex. He would naturally have said: "Neither man nor woman; only a priest." He applied, with bad taste, to the Anglican clergy and to the Papal clergy, the same disdainful epithets; he included the two "cassocks" in the same phraseology; he did not trouble himself to vary the soldier's metonymies in use at that period for any priest, no matter what they were, Catholic or Lutheran. He said to Déruchette: "Marry whom you will, provided, it is not a priest."

CHAPTER XIII.

HEEDLESSNESS ADDS NEW GRACE TO BEAUTY.

WHEN Mess Lethierry had once said a thing, he remembered it; when Déruchette had once said a thing, she forgot it. Therein lay the difference between uncle and niece.

Déruchette, brought up as the reader has seen, was accustomed to but little responsibility. We insist upon it that more than one latent peril is contained in an education not taken with sufficient seriousness. It is, perhaps, unwise to wish to make one's child happy too soon.

Déruchette believed that, provided she was content, all was well. Besides, she was also conscious that her uncle was happy when he saw her so. She held nearly the same ideas as Mess Lethierry. Her religion was satisfied with going to church four times a year. The reader has seen her in her Christmas toilet. She was wholly ignorant of life. She possessed all the qualities necessary to render her one day mad with love. In the meantime, she was gay.

She sang and chattered at haphazard, took life as it came, tossed a word and passed on, did a thing and fled, was charming. Add to this, English liberty. In England, the children go about alone, the young girls are their own mistresses, youth has free rein. Such are the customs. Later on, these free girls make slaves of wives. We use the two words here in their best sense: free in growth and development, but slaves to duty.

Déruchette awoke each morning with little thought of her actions of the preceding day. She would have been greatly embarrassed had she been asked how she had spent her time

the previous week. This did not prevent her having at certain hours, troubles, a mysterious discomfort, and a sombre feeling passing over her brightness and her joy. These azure depths have such clouds, but these clouds passed away quickly. She came forth from them with a burst of laughter, not knowing why she had been sad, nor why she was serene. She played with every one. Her roguery delighted in teasing the passers-by. She played tantalizing little jokes upon the young men; if she had encountered the devil she would have had no mercy on him, she would have played a trick on him. She was pretty and at the same time so innocent that she presumed upon it. She gave a smile as a kitten gives a scratch with its claw. So much the worse for the person scratched. She thought no more of it. Yesterday had no existence for her; she lived in the plentitude of to-day. This is to have too much happiness. With Déruchette, the memory of a thing vanished as snow melts.

BOOK FOURTH.

THE BAGPIPE.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST RED GLEAMS OF DAWN, OR A CONFLAGRATION.

GILLIATT had never spoken to Déruchette. He knew her through having seen her at a distance, as one knows the morning star.

At the time when Déruchette had met Gilliatt on the road from Saint-Pierre-Port to le Valle, and had surprised him by writing his name in the snow, she was sixteen. It was only the evening before that Mess Lethierry had said to her: "Play no more childish tricks. You are grown up now."

That name, "Gilliatt," written by that child, had fallen into unknown depths.

What were women to Gilliatt? He himself could not have told. When he met one, he alarmed her, and he was afraid of her. He never spoke to a woman except from urgent necessity. He had never been a "gallant" of any of the country maidens. When he was alone in the road and beheld a woman coming towards him, he climbed over the wall of a garden, or hid himself in a thicket and fled. He even avoided old women.

He had seen one Parisian lady in the course of his life. A travelling Parisienne, a strange event for Guernsey at that distant epoch. And Gilliatt had heard the Parisienne narrate her griefs in these words: "I am greatly annoyed, I have just got some drops of rain on my hat; it is apricot, and

that is a color which stains." Having found, later on, between the leaves of a book, an ancient fashion plate, representing "a lady of the Chaussée d'Antin," in full toilette, he had pasted it upon his wall in memory of that apparition.

On summer evenings, he hid behind the rocks of the Houmet-Paradis inlet, to watch the peasant maids bathe in the sea in their shifts. One day he had watched through a hedge, the witch of Torteval put on her garter. He was probably spotless.

On that Christmas morning when he encountered Déruchette, and when she laughingly wrote his name in the snow, he returned home, no longer knowing why he had gone out. Night came, he did not sleep. He thought of a thousand things; — that it would be well to cultivate black radishes in his garden; that the exhibition was good, — that he had not seen the boat from Sark pass by; had something happened to it? — that he had seen some white stonecrop in flower, a rare thing at that season.

He had never exactly known what relationship the old woman who was dead bore to him, he said to himself decidedly that she must be his mother, and he thought of her with redoubled tenderness. He thought of the woman's clothing, which lay in the leather trunk. He thought that the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode would probably some day be appointed dean of Saint-Pierre-Port, surrogate of the bishop, and that the rectorship of Saint-Sampson would become vacant. He thought that the day after Christmas would be the twenty-seventh day of the moon, and that, consequently, high water would come at twenty-one minutes past three, half ebb at fifteen minutes past seven, and low tide at thirty-three minutes past nine, and half flood again at thirty-nine minutes past twelve.

He recalled the minutest details in the costume of the highlander who had sold him his bagpipe; his bonnet, ornamented with a thistle; his claymore; his tight coat, with short, square skirts; his kilt, his scilt or philabery, ornamented with his

sporrán purse; and his smushingmull, a horn snuff-box; his pin made of a Scotch stone; his two girdles, the sashwise and the belts, his sword, his cutlas, his dirk, and his skene dhu, a black knife with a black handle ornamented with two cair-gorums,* and the bare knees of this soldier, his stockings, his plaid gaiters, and his shoes with buckles. This equipment became a spectre, pursued him, gave him a fever, lulled him to sleep. When he awoke it was broad daylight, and his first thought was Déruchette.

On the following day he slept, but all night long he saw the Scotch soldier again. He said to himself in his sleep that the sittings of the superior court after Christmas would be held on the twenty-first of January. He also dreamed of old rector Jaquemin Hérode. When he awoke, he thought of Déruchette, and felt violent anger against her; he regretted that he was no longer a small boy, because then he could go and fling stones at her windows.

Then he reflected that if he were a small boy, he would have his mother, and he began to weep.

He formed a project of going to pass three months at Chousy, or the Minquiers. But he did not go.

He did not set foot again on the road from Saint-Pierre-Port to le Valle.

He fancied that his name, Gilliatt, remained graven there on the earth, and that all the passers-by must be looking at it.

* All these words are as written by Hugo; except bagpipe, which he writes bugpipe.

CHAPTER II.

AN ENTRANCE, STEP BY STEP, INTO THE UNKNOWN.

ON the other hand, he saw les Bravées every day. He did not do it intentionally, but he went in that direction. It chanced that his road always lay along the path which skirted Déruchette's garden wall.

One morning, as he was on this path a market woman who was coming from les Bravées, said to another, "Miss Lethierry likes sea-kale."

He made a trench for sea-kale in his garden at the Bû-de-la Rue.

Sea-kale is a sort of cabbage which has the flavor of asparagus.

The garden wall of les Bravées was very low, one could easily climb over it. The idea of climbing over it would have seemed terrible to him. But he was not prohibited from hearing as he passed, like all the rest of the world, the voices of persons who were talking in the chambers or in the garden. He did not listen but he heard. Once, he heard the two servants, Douce and Grâce, quarrelling. That was one of the noises of the house. That quarrel lingered in his ear like music.

On another occasion, he distinguished a voice which was not like that of the others, and which, as it seemed to him, must be the voice of Déruchette. He took to flight.

The words which that voice had pronounced remained forever graven in his memory. He repeated them to himself every moment. These words were, —

"Will you please to give me the broom?"

By degrees he became bolder. He dared to stay awhile. It once happened that Déruchette, whom it was impossible to see from the outside, although her window was open, was at her piano and singing. She was singing her air: "Bonny Dundee." He turned very pale, but he summoned up his courage so far as to listen.

Spring arrived. One day, Gilliatt had a vision, heaven opened. Gilliatt saw Déruchette watering her lettuce.

Soon he did more than pause. He observed her habits. He noticed her hours, he waited to see her.

He took good care not to show himself.

Little by little, at the same time that the shrubbery was becoming filled with butterflies and roses, he became accustomed to see Déruchette in the garden, as he stood motionless and mute for hours together, hidden behind that wall, seen by no one, holding his breath. One becomes gradually accustomed to poison.

From his hiding-place he often heard Déruchette conversing with Mess Lethierry under a thick arch of yoke-elms, where there was a seat. Their words reached him distinctly.

How much progress he had made! He had now come to spying and eavesdropping. Alas! there is a spy in every human heart.

There was another seat visible and quite close, at the edge of an alley. Déruchette sat on it sometimes.

From the flowers which he saw Déruchette pluck and smell, he had divined her tastes in the matter of perfumes. The convolvulus was the odor which she preferred, next the pink, then the honeysuckle, then jasmine. The rose came only fifth. She looked at the lily, but she did not smell of it.

From her choice of perfumes, Gilliatt imagined her character in his thoughts. To each odor he attached some perfection.

The mere idea of speaking to Déruchette made his hair stand on end.

A good, old peddler woman, whose wandering industry

brought her from time to time into the lane which skirted the enclosure of les Bravées, finally began to notice, in a confused way, Gilliatt's assiduity near this wall, and his devotion to this deserted place. Did she connect the presence of this man in front of that wall with the possibility of a woman behind it? Did she perceive that vague, invisible thread? Had she, in her beggared decrepitude, remained sufficiently young to recall something of her happier days, and did she still know, amid her winter and her night, what the dawn was? We know not, but it appears that once, as she passed near Gilliatt, "standing on guard," she cast in his direction the nearest approach to a smile of which she was still capable, and muttered between her toothless gums: "That warms one."

Gilliatt heard this word, he was struck by it, he murmured with an inward interrogation point: "That warms one? What does the old woman mean?" He repeated this saying mechanically all day, but he did not understand it.

One evening, when he was at his window at the Bû de la Rue, five or six young girls of Ancresse, came, as a pleasure excursion, to bathe in the inlet of Houmet. They played very innocently in the water, a hundred paces away from him. He closed his window violently. He perceived that a nude woman caused him horror.

CHAPTER III.

THE AIR "BONNY DUNDEE" FINDS AN ECHO ON THE HILL.

BEHIND the enclosure of the garden of les Bravées was an angle of the wall covered with holly and ivy, with nettles, with a wild tree-mallow, and a large mullein sprouting amid the blocks of granite; it was in this nook that he passed nearly the whole of his summer. He stood there in an indescribably pensive mood. The lizards, accustomed to him, warmed themselves on the same stones.

The summer was bright and full of dreamy indolence. Gilliatt had above his head the flitting clouds. He sat on the grass. Everything was full of the sounds of birds. He clasped his brow in his hands and asked himself: "But why did she write my name in the snow?" The sea breeze came in great puffs from the distance. At intervals in the quarries of la Vandue, the horn of the miners sounded abruptly, warning passers-by to stand aside, and that a charge was about to be exploded. The port of Saint-Sampson was not visible; but the tips of the masts could be seen above the trees. Stray gulls were flying about. Gilliatt had heard his mother say that women could be in love with men, that such things did happen sometimes. He answered himself: "That is it. I understand. Déruchette is in love with me."

He felt profoundly sad. He said to himself: "But she also, she, on her part, is thinking of me; it is well." He reflected that Déruchette was rich, and that he was poor. He then thought that the steamboat was an execrable invention. He could never remember the day of the month. He watched, in a vague way, the big, black bumble-bees, with their yellow

thighs and short wings, as they plunged noisily into the holes in the wall.

One evening, Déruchette retired to her room to go to bed. She approached her window to close it. The night was dark. All at once, Déruchette began to listen; somewhere in the dark shadow there was music. Some one who was probably on the slope of the hill or at the foot of the towers of the Château du Valle, or perhaps even still farther away, was playing an air upon an instrument. Déruchette recognized her favorite melody, "Bonny Dundee," played on the bagpipe. She could not understand it at all.

From that time forth, this music was repeated from time to time, at the same hour, particularly on very dark nights.

Déruchette did not like this very much.

CHAPTER IV.

A NOCTURNAL SERENADE.

‘Pour l’oncle et le tuteur, bonshommes taciturnes,
Les sérénades sont tapages nocturnes.’ *

Four years passed away.

Déruchette was approaching twenty-one, and was still unmarried.

Some writer has said: “A fixed idea is a gimlet. Every year it sinks in one turn. If any one desires to extract it for us the first year, it would pull out our hair; the second year it would tear our skin; the third year it would break our bones; the fourth year it would tear out our brain.”

Gilliatt had reached the fourth year of it.

He had not yet spoken a word to Déruchette. He dreamed of that charming girl, that was all.

It once happened that, being by chance at Saint-Sampson, he had seen Déruchette talking with Mess Lethierry in front of the door of les Bravées, which opened on the road to the Port. Gilliatt ventured to approach very near. He was quite sure that she had smiled as he passed. There was nothing impossible about that.

Déruchette still heard the bagpipe from time to time.

Mess Lethierry also heard that bagpipe. He had at last noticed the persistency of that music beneath Déruchette’s windows. Tender music, an aggravating circumstance. A nocturnal gallant was not to his taste. He wished Déruchette

* “For the uncle and the guardian, taciturn men, serenades are nocturnal uproars.” Couplet from an unpublished comedy.

to marry when the day arrived, when she should desire it, and when he should desire it, purely and simply, without romance, and without music. Provoked, he lay in wait, and he thought that he had caught a glimpse of Gilliatt. He had thrust his fingers into his whiskers, a sign of wrath, and had muttered: "What does that fellow mean by his piping? He loves Déruchette, that is clear. You are wasting your time. He who wants Déruchette must apply to me, and not by playing the flute."

An event of considerable importance, long foreseen, had taken place. It was announced that the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode was appointed surrogate to the Bishop of Winchester, Dean of the Island, and receiver of Saint-Pierre-Port, and that he would take his departure from Saint-Sampson for Saint-Pierre, immediately after his successor was installed.

The new rector must soon arrive. This priest was a gentleman of Norman origin, Monsieur Joë Ebenezer Caudray, anglicized into Cawdry. Some facts were known concerning the future rector which kindness and malice interpreted in an inverse sense. He was said to be young and poor, but his youth was tempered with much learning, and his poverty by many expectations. In the special language created for inheritance and wealth, death is called expectations. He was the nephew and heir of the old and opulent Dean of Saint-Asaph. At the death of this dean, he would be rich. M. Ebenezer Caudray had distinguished connections; he had almost the right to the title of Honorable.

As for his doctrine, it was variously judged. It was Anglican but, according to the expression of Bishop Tillotson, "very free;" that is to say, very severe. He repudiated phariseeism; he held by the presbytery rather than by the episcopacy. He dreamed of the primitive church, when Adam had the right to choose Eve, and when Frumartinus, Bishop of Hierapolis, abducted a maiden for the purpose of making her his wife, saying to her parents, —

"She wishes it and I wish it. You are no longer her father,

and you are no longer her mother; I am the angel of Hierapolis, and she is my wife. God is the father."

If what was said was to be believed, M. Ebenezer Caudray subordinated the text: "Honor thy father and thy mother," to the text, of greater authority in his view, "The woman is the flesh of the man. The woman shall leave her father and her mother to cleave to her husband."

Moreover, this tendency to circumscribe paternal authority and religiously to favor all modes of forming the conjugal union, is peculiar to all Protestantism, particularly in England and *singularly* so in America.

CHAPTER V.

WELL-MERITED SUCCESS IS ALWAYS HATED.

MESS LETHIERRY'S affairs at that moment were as follows: The Durande had fulfilled all that she had promised. Mess Lethierry had paid his debts, repaired the breaches in his fortune, cancelled his indebtedness at Bremen, and met his bills of exchange at maturity in Saint-Malo. He had cleared the house of les Bravées of the mortgages with which it was burdened; he had bought in all the little local charges inscribed against the property.

He was the possessor of a great productive capital—the Durande. The net revenue from the vessel was now a thousand pounds sterling, and continued to increase. Properly speaking, the Durande constituted his entire fortune.

She was also the fortune of the island. The most profitable part of her business was the transportation of cattle, and, in order to improve the stowing capacity and to facilitate the entrance and exit of the animals, they had been obliged to dispense with the quarter boats and the yawls. This was, possibly, an imprudence. The Durande had but one boat remaining—the long-boat. It was, however, an excellent boat.

Ten years had elapsed since Rantaine's theft.

This prosperity of the Durande had one weak side; it was that it did not inspire confidence; it was believed to be chance. Mess Lethierry's situation was only looked upon as exceptional. He was regarded as having committed a fortunate folly. Some one who had imitated him at Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, had not been successful. The attempt had ruined his stockholders. Lethierry said,—

“ ’Twas because the engine was badly constructed.”

But people shook their heads. Novelties have this to their disadvantage—that every one bears them a grudge; the slightest false step compromises them. One of the commercial oracles in the Norman Archipelago, Jauge the banker from Paris, on being consulted as to a speculation in steamers, answered, it is said, turning his back on the speaker, “You are proposing a *conversion* to me: the conversion of money into smoke.”

On the other hand, sailing-vessels found as many people to invest in their stock as they wished. The captains obstinately preferred canvas to the boiler.

In Guernsey, the *Durande* was a fact, but steam was not an established principle. Such is the unrelenting animosity of conservatism in the presence of progress. It was said of Lethierry, “That is good, but he could not do it again;” far from being an encouragement, his example frightened people. No one would have dared to risk a second *Durande*.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LUCK OF A SHIPWRECKED CREW IN MEETING A SLOOP.

THE equinox begins early in the channel. The sea is narrow and compresses the wind and irritates it. West winds begin in the month of February, and the waves are shaken up in every direction.

Navigation becomes an anxious matter; the people of the coast watch the signal pole, they are engrossed with the thought of ships which may be in distress.

The sea appears like an ambush; an invisible clarion sounds the alarm for war; vast and furious blasts overwhelm the horizon; there is a terrible wind. The night whistles and howls. In the depths of the clouds, the black face of the tempest puffs out his cheeks.

The wind is one danger, the fog is another.

Fogs have always been the dread of navigators. In certain fogs, microscopic prisms of ice are held in suspension, to which Mariotte attributes halos, mock suns, and mock moons. Storm fogs are composite; different vapors of unequal specific gravity there combine with watery vapors, and are superposed one upon another in an order which divides the mist into zones, and makes of the fog a veritable formation; iodine is at the bottom, sulphur above the iodine, bromine above the sulphur, phosphorous above the bromine.

This, in a certain measure, by playing the part of electric and magnetic tension, explains many phenomena, Saint-Elmo's fire, the fires of Columbus and of Magellan, the flying stars mingled with the ships, of which Seneca speaks, the two flaming Castor and Pollux of which Plutarch speaks, the

Roman legion, whose javelins Cæsar thought he saw take fire, the peak of the Château of Duino in Frioul, which the soldier of the guard caused to give forth sparks, by touching it with the iron of his lance, and perhaps, even, those lightnings from below which the ancients called "the terrestrial lightnings of Saturn."

At the equator, an immense permanent fog seems to encircle the world. The function of the cloud ring is to cool the tropics, just as the function of the Gulf Stream is to warm the Pole. Under the cloud ring, the fog is fatal. These are the horse latitudes; there the navigators of former centuries were accustomed to throw their horses into the sea, in time of storm, in order to lighten their vessels, and, in time of calm, to economize their stock of fresh water.

Columbus said, "*Nube abaxo es muerte* — death lurks under the cloud."

The Etruscans, who are in meteorology what the Chaldæans are in astronomy, had two high priests, the high priest of thunder and the high priest of the cloud; the *fulgurators* observed the lightning, and the *aquilegi* observed the clouds. The college of the priest-augurs of Tarquinies was consulted by the Tyrians, the Phœnicians, the Pelasgians, and all the primitive navigators of the ancient Mare Internum.

The mode of generation of tempests was seen to some extent even at that time; it is intimately connected with the mode of generation of fogs, and it is, properly speaking, the same phenomenon. There exist on the ocean three regions of fogs, one equatorial, two polar; mariners give them but a single name, "The Black Pot."

Along all coasts, and especially in the Channel, equinoctial fogs are dangerous. They produce sudden night on the sea. One of the perils of the fog, even when it is not very thick, is that it prevents the recognition of the change of depth by the change of color in the water; the result is a dangerous concealment of the approach of breakers and shoals. One runs on a reef without warning. Fogs often leave a vessel no other

resource than to heave to or anchor. There are as many shipwrecks caused by fog as by wind.

Nevertheless, after a very violent hurricane which followed one of these foggy days, the mail boat, "Cashmere," arrived safely from England. It entered Saint-Pierre-Port as the first ray of dawn appeared on the sea, and at the very moment when the cannon of the Château Cornet announced the sunrise. The sky had cleared up. The sloop "Cashmere" was expected, as it was to bring the new rector of Saint-Sampson.

Shortly after the arrival of the sloop, the rumor spread through the town that she had been hailed, during the night, by a long boat containing a shipwrecked crew.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LUCK OF AN IDLER IN BEING SEEN BY A FISHERMAN,

THAT night, Gilliatt, at the moment when the wind had slackened, had gone out to fish, but without taking his paunch too far from the coast.

As he was returning on the flood tide, about two o'clock in the afternoon, in fine, sunny weather, and passing before the Beasts' Horn in order to make the bight of the Bû de la Rue, it seemed to him that he saw a shadow cast in the projection of the chair Gild-Holm-'Ur, which was not that of the rock. He ran the paunch in that direction and saw that a man was seated in the chair Gild-Holm-'Ur. The tide was already very high, the rock was encircled by the waves, return was no longer possible. Gilliatt made signs to the man, but he remained motionless. Gilliatt drew nearer.

The man was asleep.

He was dressed in black. "He looks like a priest," said Gilliatt to himself. He approached still nearer and beheld the face of a young man.

The features were unknown to him.

Fortunately, the cliff was perpendicular, the water was very deep, Gilliatt tacked and succeeded in running close to the wall. The tide raised the boat enough to allow Gilliatt, by mounting on the gunwale of the paunch, to reach the man's feet. He mounted the rail and raised his hands. If he had fallen at that moment, it is doubtful whether he would have reappeared on the surface of the water. The sea was heaving

in, and he would inevitably have been crushed between the paunch and the rock.

He pulled the foot of the sleeping man.

"Ho! what are you doing there?"

The man awoke.

"I was looking about," said he.

He was now fully awakened and continued, —

"I have just arrived in this part of the country, I came here on a pleasure trip, I passed the night at sea, I found it beautiful here, I was fatigued, and I fell asleep."

"In ten minutes more you would have been drowned." said Gilliatt.

"Bah!"

"Jump into my boat."

Gilliatt kept the boat in position with his foot, clung with one hand to the rock and offered the other hand to the man in black, who leaped quickly into the boat.

He was a very handsome young man.

Gilliatt seized the oar, and in two minutes the paunch had reached the inlet of the Bû de la Rue.

The young man wore a round hat and a white cravat. His long, black coat was buttoned up to his cravat. He had light hair, *en couronne*, a feminine face, a clear eye, a grave manner.

In the meanwhile, the paunch had touched the shore. Gilliatt passed the cable through the mooring ring, then turned and beheld the very white hand of the young man holding out to him a gold sovereign.

Gilliatt gently pushed the hand aside.

A silence ensued which was broken by the young man.

"You have saved my life."

"Perhaps," replied Gilliatt.

The moorings were made fast. They stepped out of the boat.

The young man repeated.

"I owe you my life, monsieur."

"What of that?"

This reply from Gilliatt was followed by another silence.

"Do you belong to this parish?" asked the young man.

"No," replied Gilliatt.

"Of what parish are you?"

Gilliatt raised his right hand, pointed to the sky and said, —

"Of that one."

The young man bowed to him and departed.

After taking a few steps, the young man paused, searched in his pocket, drew forth a book and returned towards Gilliatt, holding out the book to him.

"Permit me to offer you this."

Gilliatt took the book.

It was a Bible.

An instant later, Gilliatt, with his elbows resting on the parapet, was watching the young man turn the corner of the path which leads to Saint-Sampson.

Little by little he dropped his head, forgot this newcomer, no longer knew whether the chair of Gild-Holm-'Ur existed, and everything disappeared for him in the fathomless depths of reverie. Gilliatt had an abyss, — *Déruchette*.

A voice calling to him roused him from this gloom.

"Hé, Gilliatt!"

He recognized the voice and raised his eyes.

"What is it, *Sieur Landoys*?"

It was in fact, *Sieur Landoys* who was passing along the road a hundred paces from the *Bû de la Rue*, in his phaeton, drawn by his little horse. He had halted to hail Gilliatt, but seemed busy and in haste.

"There is some news, Gilliatt."

"Where?"

"At les Bravées."

"What is it?"

"I am too far away to tell you."

Gilliatt shuddered.

"Is Miss Déruchette about to be married?"

"No, far from it."

"What do you mean?"

"Go to les Bravées, you will find out."

And Sieur Landoys whipped up his horse.

BOOK FIFTH.

THE REVOLVER.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONVERSATIONS AT THE JEAN TAVERN.

SIEUR Clubin was a man who waits his opportunity.

He was short and yellow with the strength of a bull. The sea had not succeeded in tanning his skin. His flesh resembled wax. He was the color of a candle, and he had the candle's discreet light in his eyes. His memory was peculiarly retentive. For him to see a man once was to have him registered as if in a note-book. His eye took an impression of a face and kept it; in vain did the visage grow old, Sieur Clubin knew it again. Impossible to throw this tenacious memory off the track.

Sieur Clubin was curt, sober, cold; never a gesture. His air of candor won at first sight. Many people considered him artless; he had in the corner of his eye a wrinkle astonishingly expressive of simplicity. There was no better sailor than he, as we have said; there was no one like him for hauling in sheets or for keeping the sails well trimmed. No reputation for religion and integrity stood higher than his. Any one who suspected him would himself have been regarded with suspicion. He was a friend of M. Rébuchet, money-changer in Saint-Malo, Rue Saint-Vincent, beside the armorer's, and M. Rébuchet was wont to say: "I would give Clubin my shop to keep."

Sieur Clubin was a widower. His wife, like himself, had been strictly honest. She had died with the reputation of unsullied virtue. If the *bailli* had paid court to her, she would have gone and told the king; and if the Deity had been in love with her, she would have told the curé. This couple, Sieur and Dame Clubin had realized in Torteval the ideal of the English term "respectable." Dame Clubin was the swan; Sieur Clubin was the ermine. A stain would have been fatal to him. He could not have found a pin without searching for the owner. He would have sent the town-crier round with a box of matches. One day he entered a wine-shop in Saint-Servan and said to the proprietor: "I breakfasted here three years ago. You made a mistake in the bill," and he returned him sixty-five centimes. His was a great probity, accompanied by a certain contraction of the lips.

He seemed to be on the watch. For whom? Probably for rascals.

Every Tuesday he took the *Durande* from Guernsey to Saint-Malo. He reached Saint-Malo on Tuesday evening, remained two days to load, and set out for Guernsey again on Friday morning.

There was a little tavern in Saint-Malo at that time, near the port, which was called the Jean Tavern.

The construction of the present quays has demolished this inn. At that epoch the sea came up to the Saint-Vincent and Dinan gate. Saint-Malo and Saint-Servan were put in communication at low tide, by carriages and *maringottes** rolling and circulating among the vessels lying high and dry, avoiding the buoys, the anchors, and cordage, and sometimes running the risk of breaking their leather hoods on a lowered yard or the end of a jibboom. Between tides, the coachmen lashed their horses across this sand, where six hours later the wind lashed the waves. On this same strand, in former days, roamed the four and twenty watch dogs of Saint-Malo, who ate

* A small carriage, furnished with rails on the sides and ends, the seats being movable.

a naval officer in 1770. This excessive zeal lead to their suppression. To-day, nocturnal barking is no longer heard between the little Talard and the grand Talard.

Sieur Clubin put up at the Jean Tavern. The French office of the Durande was located at that place.

The custom-house men and coastguards came to take their meals and to drink at the Jean Tavern. They had their separate table. The custom-house officers of Binic met the officers of Saint-Malo there, for the good of the service.

The skippers of vessels also came there, but ate at another table.

Sieur Clubin sat sometimes at the one, sometimes at the other, preferring the table of the custom-house officials, however, to that of the skippers. He was welcome at both.

These tables were well served. There were supplies of foreign beverages for mariners far from home. A dandified sailor from Bilboa would have found an *helada* there. Stout was drunk, as at Greenwich, and brown *gueuse*, as at Antwerp.

Captains on long voyages and ships' chandlers sometimes were seen at the skipper's table. There they exchanged news.

"How are sugars?"

"That kind goes only in small lots. But raw sugars sell; three thousand sacks of Bombay and five hundred hogsheads of Sagua."

"You will see that the duty will result in overturning Villèle."

"And indigo?"

"Only seven Guatemala surons have been handled."

"The 'Nanine-Julia' has come into the roads. A pretty three-master from Bretagne."

"The two cities of La Plata are quarrelling again."

"When Monte Video grows fat, Buenos-Ayres grows lean."

"They have had to reship the cargo of the 'Regina-Coeli,' condemned at Callao."

"Cocoa is rising, sacks from Caracas are quoted at two hundred and thirty-four, and Trinidad sacks at seventy-three."

"It appears that at the review on the Champ de Mars, people shouted, 'Down with the ministers!'"

"Salted green hides from Saladeros are selling, ox-hides at sixty francs, cow-hides at forty-eight."

"Have they passed the Balkans? What is Diebitsch doing?"

"At San Francisco, the supply of anise-seed is short. Plagniol olive oil is quiet. Gruyère cheese in tins, thirty-two francs the quintal."

"Well, is Leo XII. dead?" etc., etc.

These things were shouted out and noisily commented upon. At the table of the custom-house officers and coastguard, they talked less loudly.

Matters connected with the coast police and revenue require less publicity and less distinctness in conversation.

The skipper's table was presided over by an old foreign captain, M. Gertrais-Gaboureau. M. Gertrais-Gaboureau was not a man, he was a barometer. His familiarity with the sea had given him a surprising infallibility of prognostication. He decreed the weather for the following day. He auscultated the wind, he felt the pulse of the tide. He said to the cloud: "Show me your tongue." That is to say, the lightning. He was the doctor of the waves, the breeze, the squall. The ocean was his patient. He had made the tour of the world as one takes a clinical course, examining every climate in both good and bad health; he knew the pathology of the seasons to the very last details. He was heard to announce facts like the following, —

"The barometer once went down, in 1796, to three lines below tempest."

He was a sailor from love of the profession. He hated England as much as he loved the sea. He had studied the English navy carefully, in order to get at its weak points. He explained in what respect the "Sovereign" of 1637 differed from the "Royal William" of 1670, and from the "Victory" of 1755. He compared their upper works. He regretted the

towers on deck and the funnel-shaped tops of the "Great Harry" of 1514, probably from the point of view of the French cannon ball, which lodged so well in these surfaces. For him nations existed only in their marine institutions, and odd synonymes were peculiar to him. He liked to designate England by "Trinity House," Scotland by "Northern Commissioners," and Ireland by "Ballast-board."

He abounded in information, he was an alphabet, an almanack; low-water mark and tariff all in one. He knew by heart, the tolls of the lighthouses, especially of the English — a penny a ton for passing by this one, and a farthing for passing by that one.

He would say to you: "The lighthouse on Small's Rock, which used to consume only two hundred gallons of oil, now burns fifteen hundred gallons."

One day, on board ship, in the course of a serious illness, he was thought to be dead, the crew surrounded his hammock, he interrupted the hiccoughs of his death agony to say to the master carpenter: "It would be a good idea to make a mortise in the masthead caps, on each side, and put in a cast-iron sheave, to reeve the top-ropes through.

This habit of command gave him an expression of authority.

It was rare that the subject of conversation, though, was the same at the table of the skippers as at that of the custom-house officials. This case presented itself, however, in the early days of that month of February to which we have now brought the story we are relating. The three-master "Tamaulipas," Captain Zueta, coming from Chili and about to return thither, attracted the attention of both messes. At the skippers' table they talked of her cargo; at the custom-house table, of the set of her sails.

Captain Zueta of Copiapo, was a Chilean, and a bit of a Colombian. He had fought independently in the war for independence, holding now with Bolivar and again with Morillo, according as he saw his advantage. He had become rich by dint of being of service to every one. There was no man

more Bourbonist, more Bonapartist, more absolutist, more liberal, more atheist, and more Catholic. He belonged to that great party which may be called the Lucrative party. He made his appearance in France from time to time, on business ; and, judging from what was said, he willingly gave passage on his vessel to people taking flight, bankrupts or political outlaws, it mattered little to whom, so long as they paid. His process of embarkation was simple. The fugitive waited on a desert point of the shore, and at the moment of setting sail, Zuela despatched a boat to fetch him. He had in this way, on his preceding voyage, aided in the escape of a contumacious person connected with the Berton trial, and this time he intended, it was said, to carry off some men who had been compromised in the Bidassoa affair. The police, having been warned, had an eye upon him.

This was a period of flights. The Restoration was a reaction ; now, revolutions bring about emigrations, and restorations produce banishments.

During the first seven or eight years after the return of the Bourbons, panic reigned everywhere, in finance, in industry, in commerce, which felt the earth trembling, and in which failures abounded. There was a desperate scramble in politics. Lavallette had taken flight, Lefebvre-Desnouettes had taken flight, Delon had taken flight. The courts of exception were more crowded than Trestaillon.

People shunned the bridge of Saumur, the esplanade de la Réole, the wall of the observatory of Paris, the tower of Taurias d'Avignon, landmarks in history, which reaction has marked, and where one still distinguishes at the present day that bloody hand. In London, the Thistlewood trial, branching into France, in Paris the Trogoff trial, with branches in Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy, had multiplied the causes for uneasiness and flight, and augmented that mysterious underground rout which created so many gaps even in the highest ranks of the social system of the day.

To place one's self in safety — that was men's sole care.

To be compromised was to be lost. The spirit of the military courts had survived their institution. Condemnations were matters of favor. People fled to Texas, to the Rocky Mountains, to Peru, to Mexico. The men of the Loire, traitors then, patriots to-day, had founded the *champ d'asile*. A song of Béranger says, "Savages, we are Frenchmen; take pity on our glory."

To expatriate one's self was the only resource. But nothing is less simple than flight; that monosyllable contains abysses. Everything is an obstacle to the man who is fleeing. Stealing away implies disguising one's self. Important and even illustrious characters were reduced to the expedients of malefactors. And even then they succeeded badly. They were not practical. Their habits of freedom of action rendered their slipping through the meshes of authority difficult.

A pickpocket who had forfeited his ticket of probation was more correct, in the eyes of the police, than a general. Can one imagine innocence constrained to paint its face, virtue assuming a false voice, glory hiding under a mask? Such and such a passer-by with a suspicious air, was a renown in quest of a false passport. The equivocal course of a man making his escape did not prove that he was not a hero. Fugitive and characteristic traits of the time, which so-called regular history neglects, and which the true painters of the century should bring out clearly. Behind these flights of honest people, had slipped in the flights of thieves, less watched and less suspected. A scamp, forced to disappear, profited by the confusion, formed one of a number of exiles, and often, as we have said, thanks to more art, seemed, in that twilight, more of an honest man than the honest man.

Nothing is more awkward than probity in the clutches of justice. It understands nothing of the matter, and is sure to commit itself. A counterfeiter could escape more easily than a conventionary. Strange to say, one could almost affirm, particularly in the case of dishonest people, that flight led to everything. The amount of civilization which a rascal

brought from Paris or from London served him in lieu of capital, in primitive or barbarous countries, was a recommendation for him, and installed him as an initiator. There was nothing impossible in the adventure of escaping from the criminal code here and arriving at the priesthood abroad. There was something fantastic in the disappearance, and more than one flight had results like a dream.

A flight of this description led to the unknown and the chimerical. A bankrupt who absconded from Europe, reappeared twenty years later as Grand Vizier to the Mogul, or king of Tasmania.

Assisting fugitives became an industry, and, in view of the frequency of the fact, an immensely profitable industry. This speculation was eked out by certain kinds of commerce. Any one who wished to make his escape to England applied to the smugglers; he who wished to flee to America betook himself to sea captains, like Zuela.

CHAPTER II.

CLUBIN PERCEIVES SOME ONE.

ZUELA sometimes came to eat at the Jean Tavern. Sieur Clubin knew him by sight.

Moreover, Sieur Clubin was not proud; he did not disdain to know rascals by sight. He even went so far sometimes as to know them in deed, giving them his hand in the open street, and bidding them good-day. He talked English to the smuggler, and jabbered Spanish with the *contrabandista*.

He had some sayings on this point: "One can derive good from a knowledge of evil."

"It is useful for the gamekeeper to converse with the poacher."

"The pilot should sound the pirate, the pirate being a reef."

"I taste a rascal as a physician tastes poison."

There was no reply to this. Every one acknowledged that Captain Clubin was right. He was approved for not being ridiculously dainty. Who would have dared to speak ill of him? All that he did was done "for the good of the service." Everything was quite simple, coming from him. Nothing could compromise him. If crystal were to try to spot itself, it could not. This confidence was the just reward of long honesty, and therein lies the excellence of well-established reputations. Whatever Clubin did or seemed to do, no one suspected any harm on the score of virtue; he had acquired a state of impeccability; moreover, he was very circumspect, so it was said; and from an intimacy which would have been suspicious in any other person, his probity extricated itself with additional reputation for cleverness. This reputation

for cleverness combined harmoniously with his renown for simplicity, without either contradiction or trouble. Such a thing as a clever and unassuming man does exist. This is one of the varieties of the honest man, and one most appreciated.

Sieur Clubin was one of the men who when encountered in conversation with a sharper or a bandit, are accepted, understood, and respected all the more, and who possess in their favor the satisfied confidence of public esteem.

The "Tamaulipas" had completed her lading. She was ready for sea, and would soon set sail.

On Tuesday evening the *Durande* arrived at Saint-Malo when it was still broad daylight. Sieur Clubin, as he stood on the bridge and superintended the manœuvres of making a landing, perceived near the Petit-Bay, on the sandy beach, between two rocks, in a very secluded spot, two men talking together. He looked at them with his marine glass, and recognized one of the men. It was Captain Zuela. He thought that he recognized the other, also.

The other was a man of lofty stature, and rather gray. He wore the broad-brimmed hat and sober garments of the Friends. He was probably a Quaker. He kept his eyes modestly lowered.

On arriving at the Jean Tavern, Sieur Clubin learned that the "Tamaulipas" intended to sail in a fortnight.

It was afterwards learned that he had already made some inquiries on other points.

That night he entered the shop of the gunsmith in the Rue Saint-Vincent, and said to him, —

"Do you know what a revolver is?"

"Yes," replied the gunsmith, "it is an American weapon."

"It is a pistol which begins the conversation over again."

"In fact, it has in itself question and reply."

"And retort also."

"Quite true, Monsieur Clubin. A revolving barrel."

"And five or six bullets."

The gunsmith opened the corner of his lips a little, and

gave vent to that click of the tongue which, accompanied by a shake of the head, expresses admiration.

"The weapon is good, Monsieur Clubin. I think it will make its way."

"I should like a six-chambered revolver."

"I have none."

"How is that, when you are a gunsmith?"

"I have not the article as yet. You see, it is a novelty. It is just out. Only pistols are made in France so far."

"The devil!"

"It is not on sale yet."

"The devil!"

"I have excellent pistols."

"I want a revolver."

"I admit that it is more advantageous. But wait a moment, Monsieur Clubin."

"What?"

"I think that there is one of the things in Saint-Malo at the present moment, a second-hand one."

"A revolver?"

"Yes."

"For sale?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"I think I know where. I will inquire."

"When can you give me an answer?"

"Second hand, but good."

"When shall I return?"

"If I procure you a revolver, it will be good."

"When will you give me an answer?"

"After your next trip."

"Do not say that it is for me," said Clubin.

CHAPTER III.

CLUBIN CARRIES AWAY AND DOES NOT BRING BACK.

SIEUR CLUBIN completed the lading of the *Durande*, took on board a number of cattle and several passengers, and quitted Saint-Malo for Guernsey on Friday morning, as usual.

On that same Friday, when the vessel was in the open sea, which permits the captain to absent himself from the bridge for a few moments, Clubin entered his cabin, locked the door, took a travelling-bag which he had, put some garments in the elastic compartment, biscuits, some boxes of preserve, a few pounds of cocoa in sticks, a chronometer, and a marine glass in the solid compartment, locked the bag, and ran through the handles a rope, all ready to haul it up at need. Then he descended into the hold, entered the chainlocker, and was seen to come up again with one of those knotted ropes under his arm, which are provided with a hook and which are used by caulkers at sea, and by thieves on shore. These ropes facilitate climbing.

On arriving at Guernsey, Clubin went to Torteval. There he remained for thirty-six hours. He took with him the valise and the knotted rope, and did not bring them back.

Let us state, once for all, that the Guernsey which is treated in this book is the ancient Guernsey, which no longer exists, and which it would be impossible to find to-day anywhere except in country places. There it is still alive, but it is dead in the towns. The remark which we make concerning Guernsey should also apply to Jersey. Saint-Hélier is equal to Dieppe; Saint-Pierre Port is the same as Lorient. Thanks to progress, thanks to the admir-

able spirit of enterprise of this brave little insular people, everything has been transformed within the last forty years in the channel archipelago. Where there was darkness, there is light. Having made this observation, let us pass on.

In those times, which have already become historical, smuggling was very active in the channel. Contraband vessels abounded, particularly on the west coast of Guernsey. Persons fully informed as to the smallest details of what took place half a century ago even go so far as to cite the names of many of these vessels, nearly all Asturian and Guipascoan. There is no doubt of the fact that hardly a week passed without the arrival of one or two of them in the Bai des Saints or at Plainmont. It had all the appearances of a regular service. One ocean cave at Sark was, and is still, called "the shops," because people came to this grotto to purchase merchandise of the smugglers. To meet the requirements of this kind of traffic, a sort of contraband language, now forgotten, and which was to Spanish what the "Levantine" is to Italian, was spoken in the Channel.

At many points on the French and English shores, smuggling had a cordial, but secret understanding with legitimate and protected commerce; it had the right of entrance to more than one financier in high position, by a private door, it is true; and it was slyly interfused in commercial circulation and in the whole arterial system of trade. Merchant in front, smuggler at the rear; that was the history of many a fortune. Séguin said it of Bourgain; Bourgain said it of Séguin. We do not vouch for their statements. Perhaps they slandered each other. However that may be, smuggling, hunted down by the laws, incontestably had very good connections in finance. It had an understanding "with the best society." The cavern, where Mandrin formerly elbowed the Comte de Charolais, was honest on the exterior and had an irreproachable façade turned towards society; gable end to the street.

Hence much connivance, necessarily disguised. These mys-

teries demanded impenetrable secrecy. A smuggler knew many things, and was forced to hold his peace; an inviolable and rigid good faith was his law. A smuggler's chief quality was loyalty. Without discretion, no smuggling. There are the secrets of fraud, as there are the secrets of the confessional.

These secrets were faithfully guarded. The smuggler swore to maintain silence about everything, and he kept his word. There was no one in whom one could so well confide as in a smuggler.

The judge-alcade of Oyarzun one day caught a smuggler, and put him to the torture, in order to name his secret capitalist. The smuggler did not reveal the name. This capitalist was the judge-alcade himself. Of these two accomplices, the judge and the smuggler, one had been obliged, in order to comply with the law in the sight of all, to apply torture, to which the other had submitted rather than to violate his oath.

The two most famous smugglers who haunted Plainmont at that epoch, were Blasco and Blasquito. They were *Tocayos*. It is a sort of Spanish and Catholic relationship which consists in having the same patron saint in Paradise; a thing not less worthy of consideration, it must be admitted, than having the same father on earth.

When one was very nearly initiated into the furtive itinerary of smuggling, nothing was easier, and at the same time more difficult than to have dealings with these men. It was only necessary to have no fear of night excursions, to go to Plainmont, and confront the mysterious interrogation point which stands there.

CHAPTER IV.

PLAINMONT.

PLAINMONT, near Torteval, is one of the three angles of Guernsey. At the extremity of the cape, there is a lofty, turfy ridge which overlooks the sea.

This summit is a lonely place.

It is all the more lonely because a single house is visible there.

This house adds terror to the solitude.

It is said to be haunted.

Haunted or not, its aspect is singular.

This house, built of granite, and one story high, stands in the midst of the grass. It is in good condition, and can be made perfectly habitable. The walls are thick and the roof is solid. Not a stone is out of position in the walls: not a tile is lacking in the roof. A brick chimney buttresses the angle of the roof. This house turns its back on the sea. The side towards the ocean is merely a blank wall. On examining the wall attentively, a bricked-up window is to be perceived. The two gables have three windows. The front, which faces inland, alone has a door and windows. The door is walled up. The two windows of the ground-floor are also walled up. On the first floor,—and this is what strikes one first on approaching,—there are two open windows. Their opening renders them dark in broad daylight. They have no panes, not even sashes. They open upon the gloom within. One would say that they were the empty sockets from whence two eyes had been torn. There is nothing in this house. One perceives from the yawning apertures the

dilapidation within. No wainscoting, no woodwork, naked stone. One fancies that one beholds a sepulchre with windows, which permits the spectres to gaze out. The rain undermines it on the side towards the sea. A few nettles shaken by the breeze, caress the base of the walls. No other human habitation on all the horizon. This house is an empty thing wherein dwells silence. Nevertheless, if one halts and lays one's ear to the wall, one hears, confusedly, at times, the flutter of frightened wings. Above the walled-up door, on the stone which forms the architrave, are engraved these letters: "ELM-PBILG," and this date: "1780."

At night, the melancholy moon finds entrance here.

The sea surrounds this house. Its situation is magnificent, and for this reason the aspect is more gloomy. The beauty of the place becomes an enigma. Why does no human family inhabit this dwelling? The place is beautiful, the house is good. Whence comes this abandonment? These questions, suggested by reverie succeed others of the reason. This field is cultivatable, why is it not cultivated? No master. The door walled up. What, then, is the matter with the place? Why has man fled from it! What is going on here? If nothing is going on, why is there no one here? When all are asleep, is there some one awake?

The dark squall, the wind, the birds of prey, the hidden beasts, unknown beings, appear to the thought and mingle with that house. To what wayfarers is it the hostelry? One pictures to one's self showers of rain and of hail beating in at the windows. The vague drippings of tempests have left their traces on the inner wall. These walled and open chambers are visited by the hurricane?

Has a crime been committed here? It seems that this house, given over to gloom, must call for help at night. Does it remain silent? Do voices come from it? With whom has it dealings in this solitude? The mystery of the hours of darkness is secure here. This house disquiets one at midday; what is it at midnight? In looking at it one looks at

a secret. One asks one's self, since reverie has its logic, and the possible has its tendency, what takes place at this house between the twilight of evening and the twilight of morning. Has the immense dispersion of extra human life, a knot which stops it on that desert summit, and which forces it to descend and to become visible? Does the scattered come to eddy here? Does the impalpable become condensed, to the extent of assuming form?

Enigmas.

The sacred horror lies in these stones. The gloom which broods over these forbidden chambers is more than gloom; it belongs to the unknown.

After sundown, the fishing boats will return, the birds will become silent, the goatherd behind the rocks will depart with his goats, the crevices of the stones will give passage to the first glidings of reassured reptiles; the stars will begin to peep out, the breeze will blow, night will come on, those yawning windows will be there. They offer entrance to dreams, and it is by apparitions, by the faces of phantoms, vaguely distinct, by masks in flashes, by mysterious tumults of souls and shades, that popular belief, at once both stupid and profound, translates the sombre intimacy of this dwelling with the world of darkness.

The house was "haunted"; this word explains everything.

Credulous minds have their explanation; but positive minds have theirs also. Nothing more simple, say they, than this house. It is an ancient post of observation, dating from the days of the Revolution, and the Empire, and smuggling. It was built there for that purpose. The war finished, the post was abandoned. The house was not demolished, because it might prove useful again. The door and windows have been walled up on the ground floor, as a protection against intruders, and so that no one could enter; the windows on the three sides facing the sea have been walled up because of the south and west winds. That is all.

The ignorant and credulous insist: In the first place, that

the house was not built at the time of the war of the Revolutions. It bears a date—1780— anterior to the Revolution. Next, that it was not built to serve as a military post; it bears the letters “ELM-PBILG,” which contain the double monograms of the two families, and which indicate, in accordance with usage, that the house was built for the establishment of a newly married pair. Hence it had been inhabited. Why is it no longer so? If the door and the casements have been walled up to prevent any one from making his way into the house, why were two windows left open? All should have been walled up, or none. Why no shutters? Why no sashes? Why no glass? Why wall up the windows on one side if they are not walled up on the other? The rain is prevented from entering on the south, but allowed to enter on the north.

The credulous are wrong, no doubt, but the positive are certainly not right. The problem remains unsolved.

One thing is certain, that the house bears the reputation of having been more useful than injurious to the smugglers.

The exaggeration of fright deprives facts of their true proportions. Without doubt, many nocturnal phenomena among those which compose the “haunting” of the house, might be explained by obscure and furtive visits, by brief sojourns of men who immediately reëmbarked, sometimes by the precautions, sometimes by the audacity of certain suspicious gentry of trade, hiding themselves for the purpose of committing evil, and allowing themselves to be seen for the purpose of awakening fear.

At that already distant period, many audacious deeds were possible. The police, particularly in that little country, was not what it is to-day.

Let us add that if the house was, as it was said, convenient for smugglers, their meetings must have had plenty of elbow room up to a certain point, precisely because the house was superstitiously avoided. Its ghostly reputation prevented its being denounced. It is not to custom-house officials and policemen that one applies against spectres. Superstitious

persons make signs of the cross, not legal complaints. They see or think they see, and hold their tongues. There exists a tacit connivance, involuntary, it may be, but real, between those who inspire fear and those by whom it is experienced. The frightened are conscious that they do wrong to be frightened, they imagine that they have stumbled upon a secret, they have a fear, which is mysterious to themselves, of aggravating their position, and of irritating the apparitions. This renders them discreet. And, even setting aside this calculation, the instinct of credulous people is towards silence; there is dumbness in fear, the terrified speak little; it seems as though horror said to them: "Hush!"

It must be borne in mind that this goes back to the time when the Guernsey peasants believed that the mystery of the manger was repeated every year by the oxen and asses, on a certain day; a period at which no one would have dared to enter a stable on Christmas night for fear of finding the animals on their knees.

If local legends are to be believed, and the tales of the persons whom one meets, superstition was formerly carried to the point of suspending from the walls of that house of Plainmont, from nails which are still to be seen here and there, rats minus their paws, bats minus their wings, carcasses of dead beasts, toads crushed between the leaves of a Bible, sprigs of yellow lupin, strange votive offerings, hung there by imprudent nocturnal passers-by, who thought that they had seen something, and who hoped, by these gifts, to obtain their pardon, and to conjure away the bad humor of the witches, spectres, and sorcerers.

There have always been people,—and even some in very high positions,—who have believed in abacas and witches' Sabbaths. Cæsar consulted Sagana; and Napoleon, Mademoiselle Lenormand. There are consciences so uneasy that they try to obtain indulgences even from the Devil. "May God do, and may Satan not undo," was one of the prayers of Charles V. Others are still more timorous. They even go so

far as to persuade themselves that one can be in the wrong towards evil. To be irrefragable so far as the demon is concerned, is one of their anxieties.

Hence religious practices turned towards this immense but unknown power of evil. It is a form of bigotry as well as any other. Crimes against the demon exist in certain diseased imaginations; it tortures eccentric casuists of ignorance to have violated the laws of the nether world; they have scruples on the side of the darkness. To believe in the efficacy of devotion to the mysteries of the Brocken and Armuyr, to imagine that one has sinned against hell, to have recourse because of chimerical infractions to chimerical penitences, to confess the truth with the spirit of a lie, to make one's *mea culpa* before the father of the fault, to confess in inverse sense,—all this does or has existed. The reasons of trials for magic and witchcraft prove this on every page. Human dreams go as far as that. When man takes to getting frightened he does not stop. One dreams of imaginary faults, of imaginary purifications, cleans one's conscience by the shadow of the witches' broom.

At all events, if that house has secrets, that is its affair; setting aside a few chances and exceptions, no one goes there to see it, it is left alone; it suits no one's taste to run the risk of infernal encounters.

Thanks to the terror which guards it, and which wards off any one who might observe and bear testimony, it has always been easy to enter this house at night by means of a rope ladder, or even simply of the first ladder at hand, taken from the neighboring gardens. A supply of provisions and clothing would permit one to await there in perfect security opportunity and the proper time for a furtive embarkation.

Tradition relates that forty years ago, a fugitive, from politics according to some, from commerce, according to others, remained for some time concealed in the haunted house of Plainmont, whence he succeeded in embarking on a fishing boat for England. From England one easily reaches America.

This same tradition affirms that provisions deposited in this house remain there untouched, Lucifer, as well as the smugglers, having an interest in getting the person who has placed them there to return.

From the height on which this house was situated, one perceived in the southwest, a mile from the shore, the Hanway Rock.

This reef is celebrated. It had committed all the bad actions of which a reef can be guilty. It was one of the most redoubtable assassins of the sea. It lay in wait for vessels at night, like a traitor. It had enlarged the cemeteries of Torteval and of la Rocquaine.

In 1862, a lighthouse was placed on that reef.

To-day, the Hanway reef lights the navigation which it was wont to lead astray, the ambush holds a torch in its hand. That rock which was formerly avoided as a malefactor is now sought on the horizon as a protector and guide. Then Hanway reassures those vast nocturnal spaces which it terrified in former days. It is something like a brigand turned gendarme.

There are three Hanways, Great Hanway, Little Hanway, and la Mauve (the gull). It is on Little Hanway that the "Red Light" beacon stands to-day.

This reef forms a part of a group of points, some of them submarine, some, projecting from the sea, it towers above them. It has, like a fortress, its outworks: on the side of the high seas, a cordon of thirteen rocks; on the north, two breakwaters, the Hautes-Fourquies, the Aiguillons, and a sand bank, the Hérouée; on the south, three rocks, Cat Rock, Pierced Rock, and Roque Herpin, besides two sand banks, the South Boue and the Boue du Monet, and besides, in front of Plainmont, level with the surface of the water, the Tas de Pois d'Aval.*

It is difficult but not impossible for a swimmer to swim

* The Heap of Peas down the Stream.

across the strait from the Hanways to Plainmont. It will be remembered that this was one of Sieur Clubin's feats. The swimmer who knows these shoals has two points where he can rest, Round Rock, and further on, a little to the left, in an oblique line, the Red Rock.



CHAPTER V.

THE BIRDS-NESTERS.

It was near the same time of the day on that Saturday spent by Sieur Clubin at Torteval, that a singular incident occurred, which was not extensively noised abroad at first in the country, and which was only made known long afterwards. For many things, as we have just remarked, remain unknown, because of the fright which they cause in those who have witnessed them.

On the night between Saturday and Sunday, we mention the date with precision, and we think it is exact, three children climbed over the heights of Plainmont. These children were returning to the village. They came from the sea. They were what is called in the local idiom "*déniquoiseaux*." Read: *Déniche-oiseaux* — "Bird-nesters." Wherever there are cliffs and holes in the rocks above the sea, young bird-nesters abound. We have said a few words on this point already. The reader will remember that Gilliatt took an interest in it, because of the birds and of the children.

The bird-nesters are a sort of sea gamin, not very timid.

The night was very dark. Thick masses of clouds piled upon each other concealed the horizon. Three o'clock in the morning had just sounded from the church tower of Torteval, which is round and pointed and resembles a magician's cap.

Why were these children returning so late? Nothing more simple. They had been on a hunt for sea-gulls' nests in the Tas de Pois d'Aval. The season having been very mild, the pairing of the sea birds had begun very early. These children, in watching the conduct of the males and females around

their nests, and absorbed in the eagerness of this pursuit, had forgotten the hour. The flood tide had surrounded them; they had not been able to regain in season the little inlet where they had moored their boat, and they had been obliged to wait on one of the points of the Tas de Pois until the ebb tide. Hence their late return. These returns are awaited with feverish anxiety by mothers who, on finding them safe, manifest their joy in anger, and relieve their tears by administering punches on the head. They were accordingly in haste, and decidedly uneasy. Their haste was of that kind which willingly tarries, and which includes a reluctance to arrive. They had in prospect a kiss, to be followed with cuffs on the ear.

Only one of those children had nothing to fear; he was an orphan. This boy was French, without either father or mother, and quite content at that moment to have no mother. As no one took any interest in him, he would not receive a beating. The other two were Guernsey lads, and of that same parish of Torteval.

The lofty ridge of rocks scaled, the three bird-nesters arrived on the plateau whereon stands the haunted house.

They began by being afraid, which is the duty of every passer-by, and above all of every child, at that hour and in that spot.

They were very anxious to run away at full speed, and they were very anxious to stop and look.

They paused.

They gazed at the house.

It was all dark and formidable.

It was an obscure block in the midst of the deserted plateau; a symmetrical, but hideous, excrescence; a lofty, square mass with right-angled corners, somewhat similar to an immense altar of darkness.

The children's first thought had been to run, their second was to approach it. They had never seen this house at that hour. There is such a thing as the curiosity of fear. They

had a little French lad with them, which emboldened them to approach.

It is well known that the French fear nothing.

Besides, to be many in a danger is reassuring; to share fear among three is encouraging.

And then, they are hunters, they are children; all three of them together do not number thirty years; they are on a quest, they are rummaging, they are spying out hidden things; can they stop on the road? they thrust their heads into this hole; how can they avoid advancing into this hole? He who is on a hunting expedition allows himself to be carried away with the excitement of the chase; he who goes on an excursion for discovery, is caught in a set of gearing wheels. Having gazed so much into the nests of bird gives one a taste for looking a little into a nest of spectres. Pry about a bit in the infernal regions? Why not?

From prey to prey, one comes to the demon. After sparrows, hobgoblins. The boys proceeded to investigate the real state of the case with regard to all the fears which their parents had instilled in their minds. Nothing is more seductive than to be on the track of hobgoblin tales. The idea of knowing as much about them as the good wives is tempting.

All this mixture of ideas, in a state of half confusion and half instinct in the minds of these Guernsey bird-nesters, had their temerity as a result. They went towards the house.

And the small boy who served as their mainstay in this bit of daring was worthy of the position. He was a resolute lad, an apprentice to a ship caulker; one of those children who are already men. He slept at the shipyard under a shed, on straw, earned his own living, had a loud voice, liked to climb walls and trees, cherishing no prejudice against apples that came within his reach. He had worked at repairing war vessels, the son of chance, a child of luck, a gay orphan, born in France, no one knew where, two reasons for being bold, thinking nothing of giving a penny to a poor woman, very mischievous, but good-hearted, sandy haired, and one who had talked

with Parisians. At that time, he was earning a shilling a day at caulking fishing vessels under repair at the Pêqueries.

When the fancy seized him, he allowed himself a holiday and went bird-nesting. Such was the little French boy.

The solitude of the place had something indescribably funereal about it. They felt conscious of its threatening aspect. It was wild and savage. This plateau, silent and bare, terminated in a precipice at a very short distance from its steep slope. The sea below was still. There was no wind. Not a blade of grass stirred.

The little bird-nesters advanced slowly, the French lad at their head, staring at the house the while.

One of them afterwards, in narrating the story, or as much of it as he still remembered, added: "It said nothing."

They approached, holding their breath, as one might approach a wild animal.

They had climbed the steep hill which lies behind the house and which ends on the side of the sea in a little isthmus of rocks almost inaccessible; they had come quite close to the building; but they saw only the south front, which is all walled up; they did not dare to turn to the left, which would have exposed to them the other front where there are the two terrible windows.

Nevertheless, they grew bolder, the caulker's apprentice having said to them: "Let's veer to larboard; that's the fine side. We must see the black windows."

They veered to larboard, and reached the other side of the house.

The two windows were lighted up.

The boys fled.

When they were some distance away, the little French lad turned round.

"Stay," said he. "The lights have disappeared."

In fact, there was no longer any light in the windows. The silhouette of the house was outlined against the vague lividness of the sky, as though stamped out with a punch.

Fear did not vanish, but curiosity came back. The bird-nesters approached once more.

All at once, the light reappeared simultaneously at both windows. The two Torteval boys took to their heels and fled. The little imp of a French lad did not advance, neither did he retreat.

The light vanished, then flashed forth again. Nothing could be more horrible. The reflection made a vague streak of light on the grass wet with the dew. At one time, the light cast upon the inner wall of the house great black profiles which moved, and shadows of enormous heads.

However, as the house had neither partitions nor ceiling, having no longer anything but the four walls and the roof, one window could not be lighted without the other being lighted also.

Perceiving that the caulker's apprentice remained, the other two bird-nesters returned, step by step, one following the other, trembling and curious. The caulker's apprentice said to them, in a low voice, —

“There are ghosts in the house. I saw the nose of one of them.”

The two little fellows from Torteval hid behind the French lad, and raised on tiptoe, over his shoulder, sheltered by him, using him as a shield, opposing him to the thing, reassured by having him between them and the vision, gazed likewise.

The house seemed to be gazing at them in its turn. In that vast, mute darkness, it had two red eyeballs. They were the windows. The light vanished, reappeared, vanished again, as such lights do. These sinister intermissions are probably caused by the opening and shutting of hell. The vent hole of the sepulchre produces effects like those of a dark lantern.

All at once, a very opaque blackness in human form rose past one of the windows as though it came from outside, then plunged into the interior of the house. It seemed as though some one had just entered.

It is the habit of ghosts to enter through the window.

The light was more brilliant for a moment, then it was extinguished, and did not again reappear. Then noises were heard there. These noises resembled voices. It is always like that. When one sees, one does not hear; when one hears, one does not see.

Night on the sea has a peculiar silence. The stillness is more profound there than elsewhere. Then there is neither wind nor surge, in that moving expanse. Where, ordinarily, the flight of eagles could not be heard, one can hear the movements of a fly. This sepulchral quiet lent a sombre relief to the sounds which proceeded from the building.

"Let us see," said the little French boy.

And he took a step towards the house.

The other two were so afraid that they decided to follow him. They dared not run away alone.

Just as they had passed a large pile of fagots which, in some inexplicable manner, reassured them in this solitude, a sparrow-owl flew out of a bush. This rustled the branches. Sparrow-owls have an awkward way of flying, with a suspicious sidelong swoop. The bird passed in a slanting direction close to the children, fixing its round clear eyes upon them through the darkness.

There was no little trembling in the group behind the little Frenchman.

He said to the bird, —

"Sparrow, you come too late. I want to see."

And he advanced.

The creaking of his coarse, hobnailed shoes on the gorse did not prevent their hearing the noises, which rose and fell with the calm accentuation and continuity of a dialogue.

A moment later he added, —

"Besides, only fools believe in ghosts."

Insolence in the midst of danger rallies cowards and urges them forward.

The two Torteval boys resumed their march, treading in the footsteps of the caulker's apprentice.

The haunted house seemed to them to increase immensely in size. In this optical illusion of fear there was some reality. The house actually did grow larger, because they were approaching it.

In the meantime, the voices inside the house became more and more distinct. The children listened. The ear also has its power of exaggeration. It was something different from a murmur, more than a whisper, less than an uproar. At times, a word or two, clearly articulated, was detached from the rest. These words, which it was impossible to understand, sounded strangely. The boys halted, listened, then began their advance again.

"'Tis the ghosts talking," muttered the caulker's apprentice, "but I don't believe in ghosts."

The Torteval children were greatly tempted to fall back behind the pile of fagots; but they were already a long way from it, and their friend, the caulker, continued to walk towards the house. They trembled at remaining with him, and they dared not leave him.

Step by step, and in perplexity, they followed him.

The caulker's apprentice turned towards them and said, —

"You know that it is not true. There are none."

The house grew higher and higher. The voices became more and more distinct.

They drew nearer.

As they approached, they perceived that there was something like a muffled light in the house. It was a very vague light, like one of those dark-lanterns effects just mentioned, and which are common in the illumination of witches' meetings.

When they were very close they halted.

One of the two Torteval boys ventured this remark, —

"They are not ghosts; they are the ladies in white."

"What's that dangling from the window?" asked the other.

"It appears to be a rope."

"It is a snake."

"'Tis the hangman's rope," said the French lad, authoritatively. "That suits them. But I don't believe it."

And in three bounds rather than in three steps, he reached the base of the wall of the building. There was something feverish about this boldness.

The other two imitated him shivering, and placed themselves very close to him, one pressing his right side, the other, his left. The boys applied their ears to the wall. The talking in the house continued, —

This is what the phantoms were saying, * —

"So 'tis settled?"

"Settled."

"'Tis said?"

"Yes, said."

"A man is to wait here and go to England with Blasquito?"

"By paying for it."

"By paying for it."

"Blasquito will take the man in his bark."

"Without seeking to learn from what country he comes?"

"That does not concern us."

"Without inquiring his name!"

"We ask no names; we weigh purses."

"Good. The man will wait in this house."

"He must have something to eat."

"He shall have it."

"Where?"

"In this bag which I have brought."

"Very good."

"Can I leave the bag here?"

"Smugglers are not thieves."

"And when do the rest of you set out?"

"To-morrow morning. If your man were ready he might come with us."

"He is not ready."

"That's his affair."

* The whole conversation was in Spanish.

"How many days will he have to wait in this house?"

"Two, three, four days, more or less."

"Is it certain that Blasquito will come?"

"Certain."

"Here? To Plainmont?"

"To Plainmont."

"What week?"

"Next week."

"What day?"

"Friday, Saturday, or Sunday."

"He cannot fail?"

"He is my Tocayo."

"Will he come in any weather?"

"At any time. He knows no fear. I am Blasco, he is Blasquito."

"So he cannot fail to come to Guernsey?"

"I come one month; he comes the next month."

"I understand."

"Counting from Saturday next, a week from to-day, five days will not pass before Blasquito arrives."

"But if the sea be very rough?"

"Egurraldia gaiztoa?"*

"Yes."

"Blasquito will not come so quickly, but he will come."

"Where is he coming from?"

"From Bilbao."

"Where is he going?"

"To Portland."

"That is well."

"Or to Torbay."

"That is better."

"Your man may rest easy."

"Blasquito will not betray him?"

"Cowards are traitors. We are brave men. The sea is the church of winter. Treachery is the church of hell."

* Basque. Bad weather.

"No one can hear what we are saying?"

"It is impossible to hear or to see us. Fear creates a desert here."

"I know it."

"Who would dare to run the risk of listening to us?"

"That is true."

"Besides, if any one were to listen, he would not understand. We are speaking a wild language which no one here knows. Since you speak it, it means that you are one of us."

"I have only come to make arrangements with you."

"That is well."

"Now I am going."

"So be it."

"Tell me — what if the passenger should wish Blasquito to take him elsewhere than to Portland or to Torbay?"

"Let him bring doubloons."

"Will Blasquito do what the man wishes?"

"Blasquito will do what the doubloons command."

"Does it take much time to go to Torbay?"

"As it pleases the wind."

"Eight hours?"

"More or less."

"Will Blasquito obey his passenger?"

"If the sea obeys Blasquito."

"He will be well paid."

"Gold is gold. The wind is the wind."

"That is true."

"Man with gold can do what he will. God does what he will with the wind."

"The man who counts on going with Blasquito will be here on Friday."

"Good."

"At what time will Blasquito arrive?"

"At night. He arrives at night. He departs at night. We have a wife whose name is the Sea, and a sister whose name is Night. The wife sometimes deceives; the sister, never."

"All is settled. Farewell, men."

"Good night. A drop of brandy?"

"Thanks."

"'Tis better than syrup."

"I have your word."

"My name is Point of Honor."

"Farewell."

"You are a gentleman and I am a caballero."

It was clear that devils alone could talk thus. The children listened no longer, and this time took to flight for good, the little Frenchman, convinced at last, running even faster than the others.

On the Tuesday which followed this Saturday, *Sieur Clubin* was again in *Saint-Malo*, with the *Durande*.

The "*Tamaulipas*" was still lying in the roadstead.

Sieur Clubin asked the innkeeper of the *Jean Tavern*, between two whiffs of his pipe, —

"Well, and when does that '*Tamaulipas*' sail?"

"Day after to-morrow, Thursday," replied the innkeeper."

That evening, *Clubin* supped at the table of the coast guardsmen, and, contrary to his custom, he went out after supper. The result of this absence was that he could not attend to the *Durande's* office, and almost lost his cargo. This was noticed in so punctual a man.

It appeared that he conversed for a few minutes with his friend the money-changer.

He returned two hours after *Noquette* had sounded the curfew. The Brazilian bell rings at ten o'clock. Hence, it was midnight.

CHAPTER VI.

THE JACRESSARDE.

FORTY years ago, Saint-Malo had an alley called la Ruelle Coutanchez. This alley no longer exists, having been absorbed in improvements.

It consisted of a double row of wooden houses leaning towards each other, and leaving between them sufficient space for a narrow rivulet, which was called the street. People walked with their legs far apart on both sides of the water, knocking their heads or their elbows against the houses on the right and the left.

These old barracks of the Norman Middle Ages have almost human profiles. From ruined houses to ghosts is not a long step. Their receding stories, their overhanging walls, their bowed penthouses, and their thickets of ironwork resemble lips, chins, noses, and eyebrows. The garret window is the eye of a one-eyed man. The wall is the cheek, wrinkled and covered with blotches. Their foreheads touch, as though they were plotting some evil deed. All those words of ancient civilization,—slit-weazen, slash-face, cut-throat,—are closely connected with that architecture.

One of the houses in Coutanchez alley, the largest, the most famous, or the most notorious, was called the Jacressarde.

The Jacressarde was the lodging-house for those who have no lodging. In all towns, and particularly in seaports, there is a residuum beneath the population. People without avowed employment, to such a degree that even justice itself cannot succeed in forcing an avowal from them; rovers seeking adventures, hunters after expedients, chemists of the sharper spe-

cies, always putting life back into the crucible, people in rags of every shape and all manners of wearing them, the withered fruits of dishonesty, bankrupt existences, consciences which have defaulted, those who have failed in the house-breaking trade (for great masters in breaking and entering move in a higher sphere), workers in evil trades, both male and female, scamps of both sexes, tattered and ragged elbows, rascals who have ended in indigence, scoundrels who have missed the wages of sin, the vanquished in the social duel, the hungry who have been devoured, the knife-grinders of crime, blackguards in every sense of the word. Human intelligence is there, but bestial. It is the dung heap of souls. It collects in a corner, over which passes, from time to time, that cleansing touch of the broom which is called the police.

In Saint-Malo, la Jacressarde was that corner.

It is not the great criminals, bandits, assassins, thieves, the great products of ignorance and indigence, which are found in such dens. If murder is represented there, it is by some brutal drunkard; theft does not go beyond the pickpocket. It is rather the spittle of society than its vomit. The vagabond, yes; the highwayman, no. Nevertheless, one could not trust to it. This last stage of Bohemians may contain villanous extremes. Once, in casting the net over l'Épi-scié, which was to Paris what the Jacressarde was to Saint-Malo, the police caught Lacenaire.

These dens admit everything. Falls have a levelling tendency. Sometimes tattered honesty descends here. Virtue and probity have been known to have strange experiences. One must neither esteem the Louvre nor despise the galleys by appearances. Public respect, as well as universal reprobation, requires weeding. One meets surprises. An angel in the brothel, a pearl in the dung heap, such gloomy and dazzling discoveries are possible.

The Jacressarde was a courtyard, rather than a house; and a well, rather than a courtyard. It had no story looking on the street. A lofty wall pierced by a low door formed its façade.

On raising the latch and opening the door, you found yourself in a courtyard.

In the middle of this court, one beheld a round hole, surrounded by a stone curb on a level with the soil. It was a well. A pavement framed the curb.

The court, which was square, was built up on three sides. On the street side, on the wall, but facing the door of the gateway, and to the right and the left, stood the house.

If you entered there after nightfall, somewhat at your own risk and peril, you heard a confused sound of breathing, and if there was sufficient moonlight or starlight to give form to the obscure lineaments which you had before your eyes, this is what you beheld :—

The courtyard, the well ; around the court, opposite the door, a shed, in the shape of a sort of a horseshoe with square corners, a wormeaten gallery, entirely open, with a raftered ceiling, supported by stone pillars unequally spaced ; in the centre, the well ; around the well, a litter of straw ; and, like a circular chaplet, upright soles, the bottoms of boots trodden at the heels, toes peeping through the holes in shoes, and many bare heels, the feet of sleeping men, women, and children.

Beyond these feet, as the eye penetrated into the shadow of the shed, it distinguished bodies, forms, sleeping heads, inert outstretched forms, rags of both sexes, promiscuousness in a dung heap, an indescribable and sinister layer of humanity. This sleeping-room was open to every one. The charge was two sous a week. The feet touched the well. On stormy nights, the rain fell on those feet ; on winter nights, it snowed on those bodies.

Who were these people ? The unknown. They came at night, and they went away in the morning. The social order is made up in part of these spectres. Some glided in for a night and did not pay. The majority of them had eaten nothing during the day. Every kind of vice, and abjectness, all sorts of infection and distress ; the same sleep of exhaustion on the same bed of filth. The dreams of all these souls kept

each other company. A gloomy meeting, wherein moved and blended in the same miasma, weariness, weakness, the heavy slumber of drunkenness, the walking to and fro of a day without a morsel of bread, and without a good thought, pallor with closed eyelids, remorse, covetousness, hair mingled with filth, faces bearing the look of death, perhaps kisses from mouths of darkness. This human putridity fermented in this vat. They had been cast into this shelter by fate, by a journey, by the arrival on the preceding evening of a vessel, by a release from prison, by chance, by the night. Destiny emptied here its basket every day. He entered who wished, he slept who could, he spoke who dared, for it was a place of whispers. They hastened to crowd together. They tried to forget themselves in sleep, since one cannot find oblivion in darkness. They snatched from death what they could. They closed their eyes in this confused agony, which began anew every evening. Whence came they ? from society, since they were wretched ; from the sea, since they were scum.

Not every one who wished could get straw. More than one naked form lay on the bare pavement ; they lay down exhausted, they rose up paralyzed. The well, lacking both curb or cover, always yawning open, was thirty feet deep. The rain fell into it ; filth oozed into it, all the drippings of the court filtered into it. The bucket for drawing water stood beside it. They who were thirsty drank from it. Whoever was disheartened drowned himself in it. From sleep on the dung heap, men glided into that final sleep. In 1819, a boy of fourteen years was drawn out of it.

In order not to incur danger in that house, one had to be of the "right kind." The uninitiated were not viewed with a friendly eye there.

Did these beings know each other ? no. They scented each other out by instinct. The head of the house was a woman, young, tolerably pretty, who wore a cap with ribbons, was now and then washed with water from the well. She had a wooden leg.

The court became empty at daybreak, its regular lodgers fled.

In the courtyard there was a cock and some hens, which scratched in the dung heap all day. The court was traversed by a horizontal beam, on posts, in the form of a gallows, which was not so very much out of place there. A silk gown, wet and muddy, which belonged to the woman with the wooden leg, would frequently be seen on the day after a rain, hanging out to dry on that beam.

Above the shed, and like it encircling the court, there was a story, and above the story a loft. A rotten, wooden staircase piercing the ceiling of the shed, led upstairs; a tottering staircase noisily ascended by the staggering woman.

The transient lodgers, by the week or by the night, occupied the courtyard; the steady lodgers occupied the house.

Windows, without a single pane of glass; jambs, without a door; chimneys, without a hearth,—such was the house. The passage from one room to another was made either through a hole, of an oblong shape, which had been the doorway, or through a triangular aperture, which formed the intermediate space between the timbers of the partition. The plastering had fallen down and littered the floor. No one knew how the house held together. The wind shook it. They mounted as best they could on the slippery steps of the staircase. All was open. Winter entered the hovel as water is absorbed by a sponge. The abundance of spiders reassured one against its immediate downfall. No furniture. Two or three straw pallets in the corners, yawning widely, showing more dust than straw within. Here and there a jug and an earthen pan, serving various purposes. A close and hideous odor.

From the windows one looked out upon the courtyard. This view resembled the top of a scavenger's cart. The things, not to speak of the men, which lay rotting, rusting, and mouldering there, were indescribable. The fragments fraternized together; some fell from the walls, some from the living creatures. The rubbish was sown with rags and tatters.

Besides its floating population, quartered in the court, la Jacressarde had three lodgers, a charcoal dealer, a ragpicker, and a "maker of gold." The charcoal man and the ragpicker occupied two straw pallets on the first floor; the "maker of gold," a chemist, lodged in the loft, which was called, no one knew why, an attic. No one knew in what corner the woman lodged. The maker of gold was something of a poet. He inhabited a chamber next the roof, under the tiles, which had a narrow dormer window and a large stone fireplace, which made a gulf wherein the wind howled. As the window had no sash, he had nailed across it a bit of iron sheathing, which had come from the wreck of a vessel. This sheet iron let in a little light and a great deal of air. The charcoal man paid with a sack of coals, from time to time; the ragpicker paid with a measure of grain, for the chickens, a week; the maker of gold paid nothing. Meanwhile, he burned the house. He had torn away what little woodwork there was, and every now and then he pulled from the wall or the roof a lath, wherewith to heat the crucible. On the partition, above the ragpicker's pallet, there could be seen two columns of figures in chalk, made by the ragpicker, from week to week, one column of threes and one of fives, according as the measure of grain had cost him, three farthings or five centimes. The gold pot of the "chemist" was an old, broken bomb, promoted by him to the dignity of a crucible, in which he combined his ingredients. Transmutation of metals absorbed him. Sometimes he spoke to the tatterdemalions in the courtyard, who laughed at him. He said, "Those people are full of prejudices." He was resolved not to die until he had flung the philosopher's stone at the windows of science. His furnace ate up a great deal of wood. The railing of the staircase had disappeared into it. The whole house was on its way thither, bit by bit. The landlady said to him, "You will leave me nothing but the shell." He pacified her by making verses to her.

Such was la Jacressarde.

A boy, with a broom in his hand, who was, perhaps, a dwarf,

twelve years of age or sixty, with a goitre on his neck, was the servant.

The regular frequenters entered by the door to the court; the public entered through the shop.

What was this shop?

The lofty wall facing the street and to the right of the entrance to the court was pierced by a square opening, serving at once as a door and a window, with shutter and sash, the only shutter in the whole house which had hinges and a bolt. Behind this aperture, opening on the street, there was a little chamber, a compartment stolen from the sleeping shed. Over the street door this inscription was written in charcoal: "Curiosities sold here." The word was already in use at that time. On three boards fastened against the window like shelves, several china jars without ears were visible, a Chinese parasol in goldbeater's skin, with figures, cracked here and there, impossible to open and shut, shapeless fragments of iron or crockery, dilapidated hats and bonnets, three or four conch shells, several packages of old bone and brass buttons, a snuff-box with a portrait of Marie-Antoinette, and a tattered copy of Boisbertrand's algebra.

This was the shop. This assortment constituted the "curiosities." The shop communicated, by a rear door, with the court in which the well was situated. It contained a table and a chair. The woman with the wooden leg was the shop-keeper.

CHAPTER VII.

NOCTURNAL PURCHASES AND A SHADY VENDOR.

CLUBIN had been absent from the Jean Tavern the whole of Tuesday evening; he was absent again on Wednesday evening.

That evening at dusk, two men entered Coutanchez alley, they halted in front of la Jacressarde. One of them knocked at the window. The shop door opened. They entered. The woman with the wooden leg bestowed on them the smile reserved for respectable citizens. A candle stood on the table.

These men were, in fact, two respectable citizens.

The one who had knocked said: "Good evening, my good woman. I have come for that affair."

The woman with the wooden leg smiled once more, and went out through the door opening on the courtyard with the well.

A moment later, the rear door opened again, and a man presented himself in the opening. This man wore a cap and a blouse, and under his blouse appeared the shape of some object. There were bits of straw in his blouse, and he had the look of a man just awakened.

He advanced. They exchanged glances. The man in the blouse had a confused but cunning air. He said, —

"Are you the gunsmith?"

The man who had knocked replied, —

"Yes. Are you the Parisian?"

"Called Peaurouge (Red skin). Yes."

"Show it."

"Here it is."

The man drew from beneath his blouse a weapon which was very rare in Europe at that period, a revolver.

This revolver was new and bright. The two citizens examined it. The one who seemed to be acquainted with the house, and whom the man in the blouse had called "the gunsmith," tried the mechanism. He passed it to the other man, who appeared to be more of a stranger and who kept his back turned to the light.

The gunsmith resumed, —

"How much?"

The man in the blouse replied, —

"I have just come from America with it. Some people bring monkeys, parrots, and animals, as though the French were savages. I have brought this. It is a useful invention."

"How much?" repeated the gunsmith.

"It is a pistol which turns round like a mill-wheel."

"How much?"

"Bang, one shot. Bang, a second shot. Bang, a hailstorm. That does some execution."

"How much?"

"There are six chambers."

"Well, how much?"

"Six chambers, that makes six louis."

"Will you take five louis?"

"Impossible, one louis a bullet. That's the price."

"Shall we make a trade? Be reasonable."

"I have named a fair price. Examine it, monsieur gunsmith."

"I have examined it."

"The chamber turns like Monsieur Tallyrand. That chamber might be put in the dictionary of weathervanes. 'Tis a jewel."

"I have seen it."

"As for the barrel, 'tis of Spanish forging."

"I have noticed it."

"It is twisted. This is the way this twisting is done. The

basket of an old junk man is emptied into the forge. They fill it full of old iron scraps, old blacksmith's nails, broken horseshoes" —

"And old scythe blades."

"I was going to mention that, monsieur gunsmith. They give all these scraps a good welding heat, and that makes a magnificent iron." —

"Yes, but it may have cracks, flaws, cross breaks."

"Pardieu! But the cross breaks are remedied by little dovetails, just as the risk of defects in soldering is avoided by hard pounding. The material is flattened out with the big hammer, it is then subjected to two welding heats; if the iron has been over-heated, it is retempered by plunging it into melted fat, and with light blows. Then the stuff is drawn out, well rolled and with that iron, fichtre! such barrels as this are made."

"So you belong to that craft?"

"I am of all crafts."

"The barrel is water color."

"'Tis a beauty, monsieur gunsmith. It is produced by anti-mony."

"We will say, then, that we are to pay you five louis for that."

"Allow me to call monsieur's attention to the fact that I had the honor to say six louis."

The gunsmith lowered his voice, —

"Listen, Parisian. Take advantage of the opportunity. Get rid of this. A weapon like this is of no good to such men as you. It directs attention to a man."

"In fact," said the Parisian, "it is a little conspicuous. 'Tis better for a respectable citizen."

"Will you take five louis?"

"No, six. One for each hole."

"Well, six napoleons."

"I want six louis."

"You are not a Bonapartist, then? You prefer a louis to a napoleon?"

The Parisian called Peaurouge smiled.

"Napoleon is greater," said he, "but Louis is worth more."

"Six napoleons."

"Six louis. It makes a difference of twenty-four francs to me."

"In that case, no trade."

"So be it. I keep the toy."

"Keep it."

"Beating me down! the idea! It shall not be said that I parted like that with a thing which is a new discovery."

"Good evening, then."

"It is an improvement on the pistol which the Chesapeake Indians call Nortay-u-Hah."

"Five louis ready money, that means gold."

"Nortay-u-Hah, that means 'short gun.' A great many people do not know that."

"Will you take five louis and a silver crown thrown in."

"Citizen, I have said six."

The man who stood with his back turned to the candle and who had not yet spoken, was making the mechanism work during this dialogue. He bent down to the gunsmith's ear and whispered to him, —

"Is the article good?"

"Excellent."

"I will give the six louis."

Five minutes later, while Parisian, surnamed Redskin, was thrusting the six louis d'or which he had just received, into a secret slit under the armpit of his blouse, the gunsmith and the purchaser, the latter bearing off the revolver in his trousers' pocket, quitted the Ruelle Coutanchez.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RED BALL AND THE BLACK BALL CAROM.

ON the following day, which was Thursday, something tragic took place at a short distance from Saint-Malo, near the Point du Décollé, at a spot where the cliff is lofty and where the sea is deep.

A tongue of rocks in the form of a lance head, which is connected with the land by a narrow isthmus, runs out into the water, and there ends abruptly in a great, perpendicular reef; nothing is of more frequent occurrence in the architecture of the sea. In order to reach the plateau of the perpendicular rock from the shore, one follows an inclined plane, the slope of which is sometimes decidedly steep.

On a plateau of this description, about four o'clock in the afternoon, stood a man enveloped in a large military cloak, and probably armed beneath it, a fact easily recognized from the angular folds of his mantle. The peak on which this man stood was a tolerably extensive platform, dotted with great cubes of rock like immense paving stones, which left narrow passages between them. This platform, on which grew short, thick turf, ended, on the side towards the sea, in an open space, terminating in a vertical escarpment. This escarpment, elevated sixty feet above high water, seemed as though cut by the plummet. Its angle was broken on the left, however, and presented one of those natural staircases peculiar to granite cliffs, whose very inconvenient steps sometimes require the strides of giants, or the leaps of clowns. This fall of rocks descended perpendicularly to the sea, and plunged into it. It was almost a breakneck angle. Nevertheless, in case

of necessity, one could embark there under the very wall of the cliff.

The breeze was blowing. The man, muffled in his cloak, firm on his legs, with his left hand clasping his right elbow, was closing one eye, and applying the other to a telescope. He seemed to be absorbed in intent scrutiny. He had approached the brink of the precipice, and stood there motionless, his glance fixed immovably on the horizon. The tide was high. The waves beat against the base of the cliff below him.

The object which this man was observing was a vessel in the offing, which was, in truth, behaving strangely.

This vessel, which had left the port of Saint-Malo hardly an hour before, had come to behind the Banquetiers. She was a three-master. She had not cast anchor, perhaps because the bottom would only permit her to swing on the edge of the cable, and because the vessel would have strained on her anchor under the cut water. She had contented herself with lying to.

The man, who was a coastguard, as was evident from his uniform cape, was watching all the manœuvres of the three-master, and seemed to be taking mental notes of them. The vessel had come to, with her head-sheets hauled to windward, which was indicated by the fore-topsail being laid aback, and the wind left in the main topsail; she had hauled aft the mizzensail and trimmed the mizzen-topsail as close as possible, so as to offset the sails by each other, and make but little headway or leeway. She did not care to present too much sail to the wind, because she had only braced the fore-topsail so that it hung perpendicular to the keel. In this manner, lying to, she did not sag to leeward more than half a league an hour.

It was still broad daylight, especially on the open sea and on the crest of the cliff. The lower part of the coast was becoming dark.

The coastguard, wholly absorbed in his duty, and carefully

keeping a watch on the offing, had not thought of scrutinizing the rock beside and below him. His back was turned towards the sort of hardly practicable staircase which placed the plateau of the cliff in communication with the sea. He had not observed that something was moving there. On that staircase, behind a projecting point, there was some one, a man, hidden there, to all appearances, before the arrival of the coastguard. From time to time, a head emerged from the shadow beneath the rock, looked up and watched the watcher. The head, covered with a large American hat, was that of the Quaker-looking man, who had been talking among the stones of the Petit-Bey, with Captain Zuela, ten days previously.

All at once the coastguard's attention appeared to redouble. He rapidly wiped the glass of his telescope with his sleeve, and pointed it intently at the three-master.

A black spot had just detached itself from her side.

This black spot, resembling an insect on the sea, was a boat.

The boat seemed desirous of reaching the shore. It was manned by several sailors, who were rowing vigorously.

It veered off little by little, and directed its course towards the Point du Décallé.

The coastguard had reached the point of most intense scrutiny. He had approached still closer to the extreme edge of the cliff.

At that moment, a man of lofty stature, the Quaker, rose behind the coastguard at the top of the staircase. The watcher did not see him.

This man paused for a moment, with arms at his side and fists clenched, and with the eye of a sportsman taking aim, he gazed at the back of the coastguard.

Only four paces separated him from the coastguard; he placed one foot in front, then halted; he took a second step and paused again; he made no other movement than walking; all the rest of his body was like a statue; his foot trod the turf noiselessly; he took the third step, and paused; he almost touched the coastguard, who was still motionless with

his telescope. The man slowly brought his two clenched fists on a level with his collar bone, then his forearms abruptly descended, and his two fists struck the coastguard on the shoulders as though fired from a cannon. The shock was fatal. The coastguard had not time to utter a cry. He fell head foremost from the cliff into the sea. The soles of his shoes were visible during the space of a flash of lightning. It was like the fall of a stone. The sea closed again.

Two or three great circles formed on the dark water.

Nothing remained but the telescope, which had escaped from the coastguard's hand and had fallen on the grass.

The Quaker bent over the brink of the precipice, watched the circles disappear in the waves, waited a few minutes, then straightened himself up, humming between his teeth, —

“Monsieur d'la Police est mort
En perdant la vie.” *

He bent over a second time. Nothing made its appearance. Only, at the spot where the coastguard had been engulfed, a sort of reddish-brown thickness had formed, which spread over the undulations of the waves. It is probable that the coastguard had fractured his skull on some submarine rock. His blood rose up and formed a stain on the foam. As the Quaker watched this reddish spot, he resumed, —

“Un quart d'heure avant sa mort
Il était encore . . .” †

He did not finish.

He heard a very soft voice say behind him, —

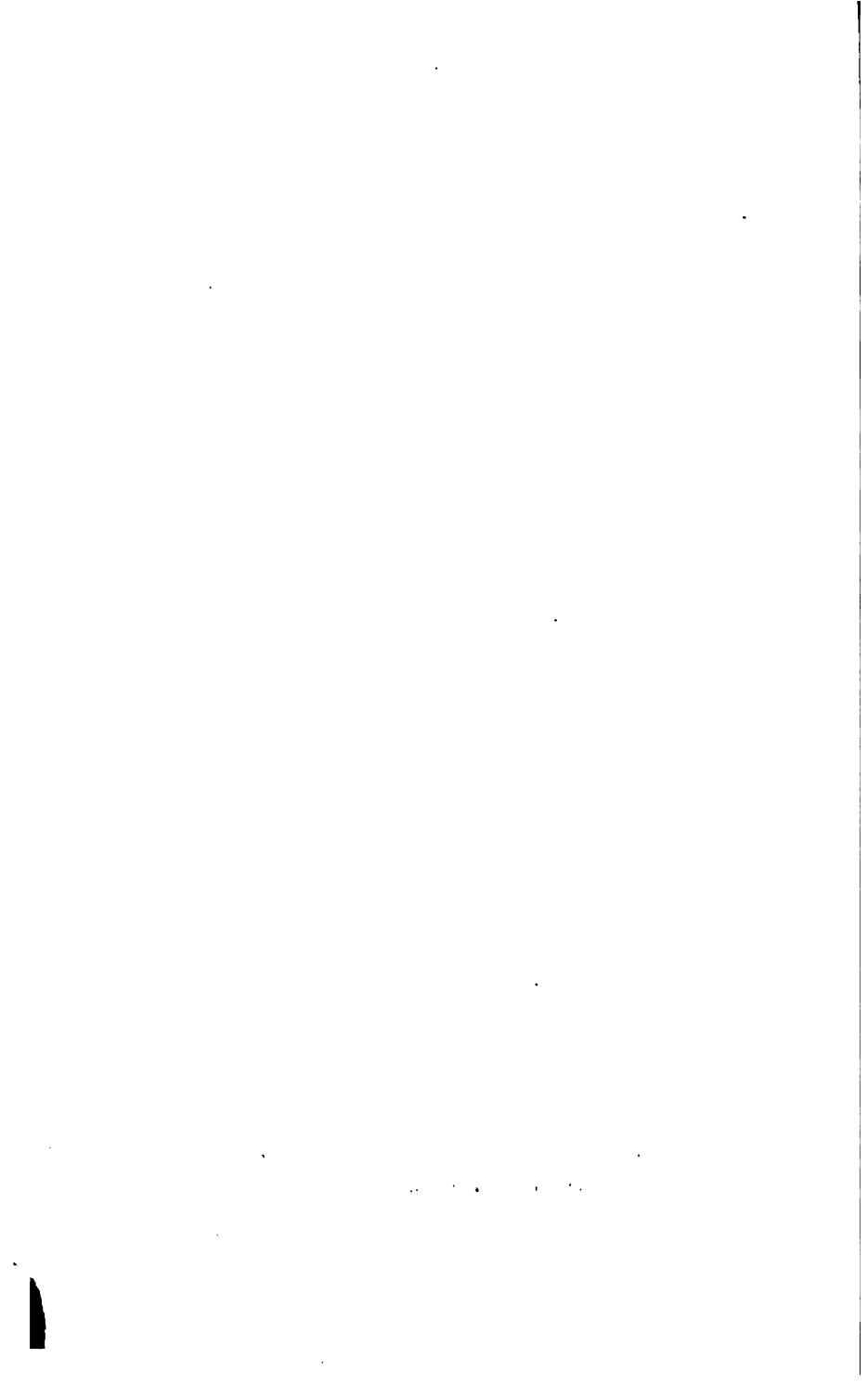
“Here you are, Rantaine, good day. You have just killed a man.”

He turned round, and beheld, fifteen paces behind him, at the mouth of one of the small passages between the rocks, a little man with a revolver in his hand.

* Monsieur of the police died by losing his life.

† A quarter of an hour before his death he was still —

*The guard fell head foremost from
the cliff into the sea.*







He replied, —

“As you see. Good day, *Sieur Clubin*.”

The little man started.

“You recognize me?”

“You recognized me,” retorted *Rantaine*.

In the meantime, they could hear the sound of oars on the water. It was the boat observed by the coastguard, which was approaching.

Sieur Clubin said in a low voice, as though speaking to himself, —

“That was quickly done.”

“What can I do for you?” asked *Rantaine*.

“Not much. It is just ten years since I have seen you. You must have prospered in your affairs. How are you?”

“Well,” said *Rantaine*. “And you?”

“Very well,” replied *Sieur Clubin*.

Rantaine took a step towards *Clubin*.

A small, sharp noise struck his ear. It was *Sieur Clubin* cocking his revolver.

“*Rantaine*, we are fifteen paces apart. That’s a good distance. Remain where you are.”

“Ah!” ejaculated *Rantaine*. “What do you want with me?”

“I have come to have a talk with you.”

Rantaine did not stir. *Sieur Clubin* went on, —

“You have just assassinated a coastguard.”

Rantaine cocked the brim of his hat and replied, —

“You have already done me the honor to tell me so.”

“In less precise terms. I said, ‘A man; I now say a coastguard.’ That coastguard was number six hundred and nineteen. He was the father of a family. He leaves a wife and five children.”

“That’s as it should be,” said *Rantaine*.

A momentary pause ensued.

“These are picked men, these coastguards,” pursued *Clubin*, “nearly all of them old sailors.”

"I have noticed," said Rantain, "that these men generally do leave a wife and five children."

Sieur Clubin continued, —

"Guess how much this revolver cost me."

"'Tis a fine weapon," replied Rantaine.

"What do you value it at?"

"I value it highly."

"It cost me a hundred and forty-four francs."

"You must have bought it," said Rantaine, "at the shop for weapons in the Ruelle Coutanchez."

Clubin resumed, —

"He did not utter a cry. A fall cuts short the voice."

"Sieur Clubin, there will be a breeze to-night."

"I am the only one in the secret."

"Do you still stop at the Jean Tavern?" asked Rantaine.

"Yes, one is not badly off there."

"I remember having eaten good sauerkraut there."

"You must be excessively strong, Rantaine. Such shoulders as you have! I should not like to get a rap from you. When I came into the world, I was so puny looking that they did not know whether they would succeed in raising me."

"They did succeed, luckily."

"Yes, I still stop at that old Jean Tavern."

"Do you know, Sieur Clubin, how I recognized you? Because you recognized me. I said to myself: 'No one but Clubin could do that.'"

And he advanced a step.

"Stand back where you were, Rantaine."

Rantaine retreated, and indulged in this aside, —

"One becomes a child before such a machine as that."

Sieur Clubin continued, —

"This is the situation; we have on our right, in the direction of Saint-Énogat, three hundred paces from here, another coastguard, number six hundred and eighteen, who is alive; and on our left, in the direction of Saint-Lenaire, a custom-house station. That makes seven armed men who can arrive

here in five minutes. The rock will be surrounded. The pass will be guarded. Impossible to escape. There is a corpse at the foot of the cliff."

Rantaine cast a sidelong glance at the revolver.

"As you say, Rantaine, it is a pretty weapon. Perhaps it is only loaded with powder. But what of that? One shot will suffice to bring an armed force. I can fire six."

The alternate splash of the oars was becoming very distinct. The boat was not very far away.

The big man looked at the little man in a strange way. *Sieur Clubin* spoke in a voice that was more and more tranquil and gentle.

"Rantaine, the men in the boat which is approaching, on learning what you have just done here, would lend armed assistance and aid in arresting you. You pay ten thousand francs to *Captain Zuela* for your passage. By the way, you would have found it cheaper with the smugglers of *Plainmont*; but they would only have taken you to *England*; and, besides, you cannot run the risk of going to *Guernsey*, where people have the honor of knowing you. I return to the situation. If I fire, you are arrested. You pay to *Zuela* for your flight, ten thousand francs. You have given him five thousand in advance. *Zuela* will keep the five thousand francs and will go off with them. There you have it. Rantaine you are well disguised. That hat, that queer coat, and your gaiters change you. You have forgotten the spectacles. You have done well to let your whiskers grow."

Rantaine forced a smile which bore close resemblance to a gnashing of teeth. *Clubin* continued, —

"Rantaine, you have on a pair of *American breeches*, with double fobs. In one is your watch. Keep it."

"Thanks, *Sieur Clubin*."

"In the other, there is a small box of wrought iron, which opens and shuts with a spring. It is an old sailor's snuff-box. Pull it out of your fob, and toss it to me."

"But this is robbery!"

"You are free to call the guard."

And Clubin gazed steadily at Rantaine.

"Stay, Mess Clubin,—" said Rantaine, advancing a step and holding out his open palm.

"Mess" was a flattery.

"Remain where you are, Rantaine."

"Mess Clubin, let us come to an understanding. I offer you half."

Clubin folded his arms, from which peeped the muzzle of the revolver.

"Rantaine, for whom do you take me? I am an honest man."

And he added after a pause, —

"I must have all."

Rantaine muttered between his teeth: "This fellow is made on a stiff model."

Meanwhile, Clubin's eye had begun to flash. His voice became as clear and trenchant as steel. He exclaimed, —

"I see that you mistake me. What you call robbery, I call restitution. Listen, Rantaine. Ten years ago, you quitted Guernsey by night, taking with you from the treasury of a concern fifty thousand francs which belonged to you, and forgetting to leave there fifty thousand francs which belonged to another man. Those fifty thousand francs, stolen by you from your partner, excellent and worthy Mess Lethierry, amount, with compound interest for ten years, to eighty thousand eight hundred and sixty-six francs, sixty-six centimes. Yesterday, you entered a money-changer's office. I will tell you his name: Rébuchet, Rue Saint-Vincent. You counted out to him seventy-six thousand francs in bank notes, for which he gave you three English bank notes of a thousand pounds each, plus the odd change. You placed those bank bills in the iron snuff-box in your right-hand fob. These three thousand pounds sterling make seventy-five thousand francs. In the name of Mess Lethierry, I will content myself with that. I set out to-morrow for Guernsey, and I mean to carry them

back to him. Rantaine, the three-master which is lying to yonder is the 'Tamaulipas.' You had your trunks put aboard of her last night, mixed with the bags and the hammocks of the crew. You wish to quit France. You have your own reasons for so doing. You are going to Arequipa. The boat is coming to take you off. You are waiting for it here. It is coming. It can be heard in the water. It depends upon me to let you go or to force you to remain. Enough said. Throw me that iron snuff-box."

Rantaine opened his fob, pulled out a little box, and threw it to Clubin. It was the snuff-box. It rolled to Clubin's feet.

Clubin bent without lowering his head, picked up the snuff-box with his left hand, keeping his two eyes and the six barrels of the revolver directed towards Rantaine.

Then he exclaimed, —

"Turn your back, my friend."

Rantaine turned his back.

Sieur Clubin placed his revolver under his arm, and pressed the spring of the snuff-box. The box opened.

It contained four bank notes, three of a thousand pounds each and one of ten pounds.

He folded up the three bank notes of a thousand pounds again, replaced them in the iron snuff-box, shut the box once more, and put it in his pocket.

Then he picked up a pebble from the ground. He wrapped this pebble in the ten-pound note and said, —

"Turn round again."

Rantaine turned round.

Sieur Clubin continued, —

"I told you that I would be content with the three thousand pounds. Here are ten pounds which I return to you."

And he flung the bill, weighted with the pebble, to Rantaine.

Rantaine sent the pebble and the bank note into the sea with a kick.

"As you please," ejaculated Clubin. "Come, you must be rich. I am satisfied."

The sound of oars which had been constantly approaching, during this dialogue, ceased. This indicated that the boat was at the foot of the cliff.

"Your carriage is below. You may go, Rantaine."

Rantaine stepped toward the staircase, and disappeared.

Clubin advanced cautiously to the brink of the precipice, and, thrusting his head over, watched him descend.

The boat had stopped near the bottommost step of the crag, at the very place where the coastguardsman fell.

As he watched Rantaine going down, Clubin muttered, —

"Six hundred and nineteen is a good number! He thought that he was alone. Rantaine thought that there were only two of them. I alone knew that there were three of us."

He caught sight, on the grass at his feet, of the telescope which the coastguard had dropped; he picked it up.

The sound of oars begun again. Rantaine had just leaped into the boat, and she was putting out to sea.

When Rantaine was in the boat, after the first stroke of the oars, and the cliff was beginning to recede behind him, he suddenly rose erect, his face became convulsed, he pointed downward with his fist, and shouted, —

"Ha! he is the devil himself, a low-lived scoundrel."

A few seconds later, Clubin, as he stood on the summit of the cliff, and pointed the telescope at the boat, distinctly heard these words articulated by a loud voice amid the noise of the waves, —

"Sieur Clubin, you are an honest man; but you will not mind my writing to Lethierry to acquaint him with the facts, and here in the boats is a Guernsey sailor, who belongs to the crew of the "Tamaulipas," named Ahier-Tostevin; he will return to Saint-Malo on Zuela's next voyage, and will bear witness that I have delivered to you on behalf of Mess Lethierry, the sum of three thousand pounds sterling."

It was the voice of Rantaine.

Clubin was a man who did things thoroughly. Motionless as the coastguard had been, and on the same spot, with his eye

at the telescope, he did not remove his gaze from the boat for a moment. He saw it grow less among the billows, disappear, reappear, and approach the vessel which was lying to, and board it; and he could recognize Rantaine's tall form on the deck of the "Tamaulipas."

When the boat had been taken on board, and hung at the davits, the "Tamaulipas" set sail. The breeze was blowing off shore, she spread all her sails, Clubin's telescope remained fixed upon her outline, growing more and more indistinct, and, half an hour later, the "Tamaulipas" was no longer anything but a black speck, diminishing on the horizon against the pallid twilight of the sky.

CHAPTER IX.

INFORMATION USEFUL TO PERSONS WHO AWAIT OR WHO FEAR LETTERS FROM ACROSS THE SEA.

ON that evening, Sieur Clubin once more returned late.

One of the causes of his delay was, that before returning he had gone as far as the Dinan gate, where there were drinking shops. In one of these shops, where he was not known, he had bought a bottle of brandy, which he had placed in the large pocket of his pilot coat, as though with the design of concealing it; then, as the *Durande* was to sail on the morrow, he had taken a turn on board to assure himself that everything was in order.

When Sieur Clubin reëntered the Jean Tavern, there was no one in the taproom but the old sea captain, M. Gertrais-Gaboureau, who was drinking his glass and smoking his pipe.

M. Gertrais-Gaboureau saluted Sieur Clubin between a whiff and a draught.

"Good evening, Captain Clubin."

"Good evening Captain Gertrais."

"Well, the "*Tamaulipas*" has sailed."

"Ah!" said Clubin, "I had not noticed it."

Captain Gertrais-Gaboureau spat, and said, —

"Zuela has cut stick."

"When?"

"This evening."

"Where is he going?"

"To the devil."

"No doubt; but where?"

"To Arequipa."

"I knew nothing about it," said Clubin.

He added, —

"I'm going to bed."

He lighted his candle, walked towards the door, and came back.

"Have you ever been to Arequipa, Captain Gertrais?"

"Yes. Years ago."

"What ports do you put into?"

"Pretty nearly everywhere. But this 'Tamaulipas' won't put into any port."

M. Gertrais-Gaboureau emptied the ashes from his pipe on the edge of a plate, and continued, —

"You know the lugger Cheval-de-Troie, and that fine three-master the Trente-Mouzin, which sailed for Cardiff. I did not approve of their sailing, because of the weather. They have come back in a pretty condition. The lugger was loaded with turpentine; she sprung a leak, and in pumping out the water she pumped out her whole cargo. As for the three-master she suffered mostly in her upper works; the cut-water, the headsail, the stancheons, the stock of the larboard anchor, all broken. The jibboom broken off close to the cap. The bowsprit shrouds and bobstays — well, go see how they look. The mizzen-mast is all right; but it got a severe strain. All the iron of the bowsprit is gone, and, incredible to state, the bowsprit is not scratched but it is completely stripped. The vessel's sheathing is open for three good square feet on the larboard. That's what comes of not listening to people."

Clubin had placed his candle on the table, and had begun to stick in afresh a row of pins which he had in the collar of his rough overcoat. He began again, —

"Didn't you say, Captain Gertrais, that the 'Tamaulipas' will not put in at any port?"

"She will not. She is going straight to Chili."

"In that case, she cannot send any news of herself while on the passage."

"Pardon me, Captain Clubin. In the first place, she can send her despatches by any vessel which she meets bound for Europe."

"That is true."

"Then there is the ocean letter-box."

"What do you call the ocean letter-box?"

"Don't you know about that, Captain Clubin?"

"No."

"When one is passing through the straits of Magellan —"

"Well?"

"Snow everywhere, bad weather always, abominably bad winds and heavy seas."

"What then?"

"When you have doubled Cape Monmouth —"

"Well, what then?"

"Then you double Cape Valentine."

"Well, what next?"

"Next you double Cape Isidore."

"And then?"

"You double Point Anna."

"Good. But what do you call the ocean letter-box?"

"We are coming to that. Mountains on the right, mountains on the left. Penguins everywhere, and stormy-petrels. A terrible place, Ah! a thousand saints, a thousand monkeys! What a rattletrap and how it knocks about! The storm does not need any help. That is where one watches the sheer rail! That is where one takes in sail! That is where you replace your main-sail with the main-staysail, and the main-staysail with the fore-staysail. Gust on gust. And then sometimes four, five, six days of lying to. Often you have nothing but lint left of a new set of sails. What a dance! Squalls fit to make a three-master skip like a flea. I have seen on an English brig, the 'True Blue,' a cabin boy, busy on the jibboom, carried off to all the five hundred thousand millions of God's thunders, and the jibboom with him. You are swept into the air like butterflies! I have seen the boatswain's mate of the

'Revenue,' a pretty schooner, snatched from above the fore-crosstrees and killed instantly. I have had my rails stove in, and my water-ways smashed to a jelly. One comes out of there with all one's canvas in ribbons. Frigates of fifty guns leak like baskets. And what a wretched devil of a coast! Nothing can be worse. Rocks slashed up as though in child's play. You approach Port Famine. There it is worse than worst. The roughest sea I ever saw in my life. Hellish coasts. All at once you see two words, 'Post-office,' painted in red."

"What do you mean, Captain Gertrais?"

"I mean, Captain Clubin, that immediately after having doubled Point Anna, you behold on a rock a hundred feet high, a pole. It is a pole with a barrel round its neck. This barrel is the letter-box. The English must needs write 'Post-office' on it. Why did they meddle? 'Tis the letter-box of the ocean; it does not belong to that honorable gentleman the King of England. This letter-box is common property. It belongs to all flags. 'Post-office,' 'tis perfect Chinese! it produces on you the effect of a cup of tea suddenly offered you by the devil. This is the way the service is performed. Every ship which passes sends a boat to the pole with its despatches. The officer in command of the boat deposits your packet in the barrel, and takes the packet which he finds there. You take charge of these letters; the vessel which comes after you will take charge of yours. As we are sailing in different directions, the continent from which you are coming is the one to which I am going. I carry your letters, you carry mine. The barrel is bitted to the post with a chain. And it rains! And it snows! And it hails! A deuce of a sea! The little imps fly from all quarters. The 'Tamaulipas' will pass there. The barrel has a good cover on hinges, but no lock or padlock. You see that one can write to one's friends. Letters reach their destination."

"That's very odd," muttered Clubin, thoughtfully.

Captain Gervais Gaboureau turned to his glass.

"Suppose, for instance, that rascal of a Zuela were to write to me, the scamp tosses his scrawl into the barrel at Magellan, and in four months' time I receive the villain's scribbling. Ah, by the way, Captain Clubin, do you sail to-morrow?"

Clubin, absorbed in a sort of somnambulism, did not hear. Captain Gertrais repeated his question.

Clubin came to himself.

"Certainly, Captain Gertrais. It is my day. I must start to-morrow morning."

"If it were my case, I should not start, Captain Clubin; the hair of the dog's coat feels damp. The sea birds have been flying round the lantern of the light-house these two nights past. A bad sign. I have a storm glass which is cutting capers. We are in the second quarter of the moon; it is the maximum of dampness. I have just seen some pimpernels with their leaves shut, and a field of clover whose stalks were perfectly upright. The earthworms are coming out, the flies are biting, the bees are keeping close to their hives, the sparrows are holding consultations. The sound of bells is clearly heard from a distance. This evening, I heard the angelus from Saint-Lenaire. And then the sunset was dirty. There will be a heavy fog to-morrow. I advise you not to start. I fear a fog more than a tornado. The fog is treacherous."

BOOK SIXTH.

THE DRUNKEN HELMSMAN AND THE SOBER CAPTAIN.

CHAPTER I.

THE DOUVRES ROCKS.

ABOUT five leagues out on the open sea, to the south of Guernsey, opposite the Point of Plainmont, between the Channel Islands and Saint-Malo, lies a group of rocks called the Douvres. This spot is dangerous.

This title, Douvre, Dover, belongs to many rocks and cliffs. There is, especially near the Côtes-du-Nord, a Douvre rock on which a lighthouse is now in process of construction, a dangerous reef, but which must not be confounded with this one.

The point of France nearest to the Douvres is Cape Bréhant. The Douvres lie a little farther from the coast of France than from the first island of the Norman archipelago. The distance of that reef from Jersey is pretty nearly measured by the extreme length of Jersey. If the island of Jersey were turned upon la Corbière as upon a hinge, point Saint-Catherine would almost strike the Douvres. This makes a distance of more than four leagues.

In these civilized seas, the most savage rocks are rarely desert places. Smugglers are to be met with at Hagot, custom-house officers at Binic, Celts at Bréhat, oyster dredgers at Cancale, rabbit hunters at Césambre (Cæsar's island), crab catchers at Brecqhou, trawlers at the Minquiers, wreckers at Ecréhou. At the Douvres, no one.

There the sea birds alone are at home.

No place is more dreaded. The Casquets where, it is said, the "Blanche-Nef" was lost, the bank of Calvados, the Needles of the Isle of Wight, the Ronesse, which renders the coast of Beaulieu so dangerous, the shallows of Prével, which block the entrance to Merquel, and which compel the placing of the red painted beacon at twenty fathoms of water, the treacherous approach to the Etables and Plouha, the two granite Druids on the south of Guernsey, old Anderlo and little Anderlo, the Corbière, the Hanways, the Isle of Ras, connected with terror by this proverb, —

" Si jamais tu passes le Ras,
Si tu ne meurs tu trembleras," — *

the Mortes-Femmes, the passage of the Boue and the Frouquil, the Déroute between Guernsey and Jersey, the Hardent between the Minquiers and Chausey, the Maurais Cheval between Boulay Bay and Barneville, all have a less evil reputation. It would be better to face all these reefs one after the other than the Douvres a single time.

In that perilous sea of the Channel, which is the *Ægean* Sea of the West, the Douvres has no equal in terror except the Pater-Noster reef between Guernsey and Sark.

And again, from the Pater-Noster one can make a signal ; a vessel in distress there can obtain assistance. To the north, Point Dicard or D'Icare is visible ; and to the south, Gros-Nez. From the Douvres, nothing is to be seen.

Storm, water, cloud, the limitless, the uninhabited. Nothing goes there except when astray. The granite cliffs are of enormous and hideous size — precipices everywhere, stern, inhospitable abyss.

It is in the open sea. The water is very deep there. A reef absolutely isolated like the Douvres attracts and shelters animals who require to be far away from man. It is a sort of vast, submarine madrepore. It is a sunken labyrinth. There, at a depth reached only with difficulty by

* If ever you pass the Ras, if you do not die you will tremble.

divers, are caverns, dens, lairs, the crossings of dark streets. Monstrous creatures swarm there. They devour one another, The crabs eat the fish, and are in turn eaten themselves. Terrible living forms, not made to be seen by human eyes, wander through this gloom. Vague lineaments of antennæ, tentacles, gills, fins, yawning jaws, scales, claws, nippers, float there, quiver, grow huge, decompose, and are effaced in the fatal transparency, Frightful swimming swarms prowl about, doing their work. It is a hive of hydras.

The horrible is there, the imaginary.

Imagine, if you can, a nest of holothurians.

To look into the depths of the sea is to behold the imagination of the Unknown. It is to see it from the terrible side. The gulf is analogous to the night. There also there is sleep, — apparent sleep, at least, — of the conscience of creation. There, in full security, are accomplished the crimes of the irresponsible. There, in a frightful place, the rough draughts of life, almost phantoms, wholly demons, fulfil the fierce occupations of darkness.

Forty years ago, two rocks of singular form, indicated the Douvres reef to passers-by on the ocean. These were two vertical points, sharp and curving, whose tips almost touched each other. One might fancy them to be the tusks of a submerged elephant, rising out of the sea. Only, they were the tusks, tall as towers, of an elephant as large as a mountain. These two natural towers of the obscure city of monsters, left between them only a narrow passage through which the waters dashed. This tortuous passage, with many crooked turns in its length, resembled a section of street between two walls. These twin rocks were called the Douvres. There was the great Douvre and the little Douvre; one was sixty feet high, the other, forty. The action of the water finally sawed into the base of these towers, and the violent equinoctial storm of the twenty-fifth of October, 1859, overthrew one of them.

The one which remains, the small one, is truncated and worn.

One of the strangest rocks of the Douvres group is called "the Man." This still exists. During the last century, some fishermen who lost their way amid these breakers, found a corpse on the summit of this rock. Beside the body lay a quantity of empty shells. A man had been shipwrecked on this rock, had taken refuge there, and had subsisted for some time on shell-fish, and had died there. Hence this name, "the Man."

The solitudes of the sea are mournful. It is tumult and silence. What is done there no longer concerns the human race. It is of unknown utility. Such is the isolation of the Douvres. All about, as far as the eye can reach, is the immense ferment of the waves.

CHAPTER II.

UNEXPECTED BRANDY.

ON Friday morning, the day after the departure of the "Tamaulipas," the Durande set out for Guernsey.

She left Saint-Malo at nine o'clock.

The weather was clear, there was no mist; old Captain Gertrais-Gaboureau seemed to have been talking nonsense.

The preoccupation of Sieur Clubin had, decidedly, almost made him miss his cargo. He had taken on board only a few bales of goods from Paris for the fancy stores at Saint-Pierre-Port, three cases for the Guernsey hospital, one of yellow soap, another of candles, the third of French sole leather, and choice Cordovan leather. He was bringing back of his former cargo a case of crushed sugar and three cases of congo tea, which the French custom-house had refused to admit. Sieur Clubin had taken but few cattle on board, only a few oxen. These oxen were rather carelessly stored in the hold.

There were six passengers on board; one Guernsey man, two cattle dealers from Saint-Malo; a "tourist," as the expression ran even at that period, a demi-bourgeois Parisian, probably a commercial traveller; and an American who was travelling for the purpose of distributing Bibles.

The Durande carried a crew of seven men, not counting Captain Clubin; a helmsman, a coal-heaver, a carpenter, a cook, who served as a seaman at need, two firemen, and a cabin-boy. One of the firemen was also the engineer. This fireman-engineer, a very brave and intelligent Dutch negro, who had escaped from the sugar plantations of Surinam, was named Imbrancam. The negro Imbrancam understood and worked the engine admirably. At first, as he appeared per-

fectly black, in his engine room, he had contributed not a little in imparting a diabolical name to the *Durande*.

The helmsman, a Jersey man by birth, and a Cotentin by origin, was named Tangrouille. The Tangrouilles belonged to the high nobility.

This was literally true.

The Channel Islands are, like England, an aristocratic country. Castes still exist there. Castes have their own ideas, which serve as their safeguard. These ideas of caste are everywhere the same, in India as in Germany. Nobility is won by the sword and lost by labor. It is preserved by idleness. To do nothing is to live nobly; whoever does not work is honored. A trade involves loss of rank. In France there was formerly no exception made, save for glass workers. As emptying bottles constituted, to a certain extent, the glory of gentlemen, the making of bottles did not dishonor them. In the Channel archipelago, as well as in Great Britain, he who wishes to remain noble must remain rich. A workman cannot be a gentleman. If he has been one, he is so no longer. Such and such a sailor is descended from knights banneret, and he is only a sailor. Thirty years ago, a real Gorges at Aurigny, who would have had a right to the seignory of Gorges, confiscated by Philip Augustus, gathered seaweed, barefooted in the sea. A Carteret is a carter in Sark. There is a draper at Jersey and a shoemaker at Guernsey named Gruchy, who declare that they are Grouchy, and cousins to the Marshal of Waterloo.

The ancient records of the benefices of the diocese of Coutances make mention of a seignory of Tangroville, an evident relation of Tancarville on the Basse-Seine, which is Montmorency. In the fifteenth century, Johan de Héronville, archer and squire of the Sire of Tangroville, bore behind him "his corselet and other harness." In May, 1371, at Pontorson, at the review of Bertrand du Gueschin, "Monsieur de Tangroville did his duty as knight bachelor." In the Norman Isles, if poverty overtakes one, he is speedily eliminated from the

nobility. A change of pronunciation suffices. Tangroville becomes "Tangrouille," and it is done.

This is what happened with the helmsman of the *Durande*.

At Saint-Pierre-Port, at the Bordage, there is a dealer in old iron, named Ingrouille, which is probably Ingroville. Under Louis le Gros, the Ingroilles possessed three parishes in the Court of Assessors of Valogne. An Abbé Trigan has written the "Ecclesiastical History of Normandy." This chronicler Trigan was curate of the Seigniorship of Digoville. If the Lord of Digoville had descended to the plebeian state, he would have been called "Digouille."

Tangrouille, that Tancarville, and that possible Montmorency, had this ancient quality of a gentleman, a grave defect in a helmsman: he was in the habit of getting intoxicated.

Sieur Clubin had persisted in keeping him. He had made himself responsible for him to Mess Lethierry.

Helmsman Tangrouille never left the vessel, and slept on board.

On the eve of departure, when Sieur Clubin arrived, at a tolerably late hour in the evening, to pay a visit to the ship, Tangrouille was asleep in his hammock.

In the course of the night, Tangrouille woke up. It was his nightly custom. Every drunkard, who is not his own master, has his hiding-place. Tangrouille had his, which he called his storeroom. Tangrouille's storeroom was in the water-hold. He had located it there to disarm suspicion. He thought he was sure that this hiding-place was known only to himself.

Sieur Clubin being sober, was severe. The little rum and gin which the helmsman could conceal from the captain's vigilant eye, he kept in reserve in a mysterious nook of the water-hold, at the bottom of a sounding bucket, and almost every night he had an amorous rendezvous with his storeroom. The surveillance was rigid, the orgy was a poor one, and Tangrouille's nightly excesses were confined to two or three mouthfuls swallowed on the sly. Sometimes, even the storeroom was empty.

That night Tangrouille had found an unexpected bottle of brandy. His joy had been great and his amazement still greater. From what cloud had that bottle fallen? He could recall neither how nor when he had brought it on board the ship. He had drunk it immediately, — partly out of prudence, for fear the brandy might be discovered and seized. He had flung the bottle into the sea. On the following day, when he took the helm, Tangrouille staggered a little.

Nevertheless, he steered nearly as usual.

As for Clubin, he had returned to sleep at the Jean Tavern, as the reader knows.

Clubin always wore under his shirt a leather travelling belt, in which he kept, in case of emergencies, a score of guineas, and which he only took off at night. Inside this belt was his name, "Sieur Clubin," written by himself on the rough leather with thick, lithographic ink, which is indelible.

On rising, before sailing, he placed in this belt the iron box containing the seventy-five thousand francs in bank notes; then he buckled the belt round his body as usual.

CHAPTER III.

INTERRUPTED CONVERSATIONS.

THE departure was made pleasantly. As soon as their valises and portmanteaus had been disposed of under and upon the benches, the passengers indulged themselves in that never-failing survey of the boat which seems obligatory, so habitual is it.

Two of the travellers, the tourist and the Parisian, had never seen a steamboat before, and from the very first stroke of the paddle-wheels they admired the foam. Then they admired the smoke. They examined, piece by piece and almost strand by strand, as they lay upon the deck and lower deck, all the maritime apparatus of rings, hooks, clamps, bolts, which, in virtue of their precision and adjustment, are a sort of colossal jewelry,—iron jewelry gilded with rust by the tempest. They made the circuit of the little signal gun lashed on the deck, “chained up like a watch-dog,” remarked the tourist, and “covered with a blouse of tarred canvas to prevent it from taking cold,” added the Parisian. As they left the land, they exchanged the usual observations on the view of Saint-Malo; one passenger enunciated the axiom that approaches from the sea are deceptive, and that at a distance of a league no coast so closely resembles Ostend as Dunkirk. He completed what he had to say on Dunkirk by this remark, that its two light ships painted red were called: one, the “Ruytingen,” the other, the “Mardyk.”

Saint-Malo grew smaller in the distance, then disappeared.

The sea was perfectly calm. The wake which stretched

tawny hide. He works slowly, because of the shortness of his limbs."

"In that respect, the Salers ox is worth more than the Aubrac."

"Monsieur, I have seen two fine oxen in the course of my life. The first had short legs, a thick forepart, a full rump, large haunches, a good length from the nape of his neck to his tail, a good height to his shoulder, easy movements and a loose skin. The second showed all the signs of judicious fattening. A thickset body, strong neck and shoulders, slender legs, a white and red coat, a sloping rump."

"That's the Cotentin breed."

"Yes, but having some connection with the Angus or the Suffolk bull."

"Believe me if you will, sir, but in the South they have competitive donkey shows."

"Of donkeys?"

"Of donkeys, as I have had the honor of telling you. And it is the ugly ones which are considered handsome."

"Then it is as with the mules. The ugly ones are the good ones."

"Precisely. The Poitevin mare. Big belly, coarse limbs."

"The best she mule known is a barrel on four poles."

"Beauty in beasts is not the same thing as beauty in men."

"And above all, in women."

"That is true."

"For my part, I hold that a woman should be pretty."

"I maintain that she should be well dressed."

"Yes, neat, clean, with care, with some style."

"With a perfectly new look. A young girl should always seem to be just from the jeweller's shop."

"To return to my oxen. I saw those two oxen sold at the market of Thouars."

"I know the market of Thouars. The Bonneaux of la Rochelle and the Babus, the wheat dealers of Marans,—I do not know whether you have heard them mentioned,—must go to that market."

The tourist and the Parisian were talking with the American colporteur. Here also, the conversation was "on fair weather topics."

"Sir," the tourist was saying, "the following is the floating tonnage of the civilized world: France, seven hundred and sixteen thousand tons, Germany one million tons; the United States, five millions; England, five millions five hundred thousand. Add the contingent of the secondary powers. Total: twelve millions, nine hundred and four thousand tons, distributed among one hundred and forty-five thousand ships scattered over the waters of the globe.

The American interrupted, —

"It is the United States, sir, which have five millions, five hundred thousand."

"I agree to that," said the tourist. "You are an American?"

"Yes, sir."

"I agree again."

A silence ensued; the American missionary asked himself whether this was a case for offering a Bible.

"Sir," began the tourist again, "is it true that you have such a taste for nicknames in America that you disguise all your celebrated men in them, and that you call your famous Missouri banker, Thomas Benton, 'Old Ingot'?" *

"The same as we call Zachary Taylor, 'Old Zach.'"

"And General Harrison, 'Old Tip,' do you not? and General Jackson 'Old Hickory'?"

"Because Jackson is as hard as hickory wood, and because Harrison whipped the Red Skins at Tippecanoe."

"That is a Byzantine fashion that you have."

"It is our way. We call Van Buren 'The Little Wizard'; Seward, who introduced fractional currency, 'Billy the Little'; and Douglas, the Democratic Senator from Illinois, who is four feet high and very eloquent, 'The Little Giant.' You may travel from Texas to Maine, and you will not find a person

* "Old Bullion."

who will speak the name 'Cass,' they say 'The Great Michigander'; nor the name 'Clay,' they say 'The miller's boy with the scar.'* Clay is the son of a miller."

"I should prefer to say Clay or Cass," remarked the Parisian; "it is shorter."

"You would be out of fashion. We call Corwin, who is Secretary of the Treasury, 'The wagoner's boy.' Daniel Webster is 'Black Dan.' As for Winfield Scott, as his first thought after having beaten the English at Chippeway, was to seat himself at table, we call him, 'Quick, a plate of soup!' †

The tuft of mist in the distance had grown larger. It now occupied on the horizon a segment of about fifteen degrees. One would have thought it a cloud, which for lack of wind was dragging along on the water. There was hardly any breeze now. The sea was smooth. Although it was not yet noon, the sun had grown pale. It lighted but no longer warmed.

"I think we are going to have a change of weather," said the tourist.

"Perhaps we shall have rain," said the Parisian.

"Or fog," added the American.

"In Italy," said the tourist, "the least rain falls at Mol-fetta, and the most at Tolmezzo."

At noon, the bell rang for dinner, according to the usage of the archipelago. Any one dined who wished. Some passengers carried their provisions with them, and ate gayly on deck. Clubin did not dine.

As they ate, the conversations continued.

The Guernsey man, having a scent for Bibles, approached the American. The American said to him, —

"Do you know this sea?"

"Certainly. I belong here."

"So do I," said one of the Saint-Malo men.

The Guernsey man signified his assent with a nod, and continued, —

* "The Mill Boy of the Slashes."

† "A Hasty Plate of Soup."

"We are in the open sea now, but I should not have liked the fog while we were off the Minquiers."

The American said to the Saint-Malo man, —

"The islanders are more at home on the sea than the people of the coast."

"That is true ; we coast people only have half a dip in the salt water."

"What are the Minquiers ?" continued the American.

The Saint-Maloan replied, —

"They are very ugly rocks."

"There are also the Grelets," remarked the Guernsey man.

"Parbleu !" replied the Saint-Maloan.

"And the chouas," added the Guernsey man.

The man from Saint-Malo burst out laughing.

"So far as that goes," said he, "there are also the Sauvages."

"And the Monks," observed the Guernsey man.

"And the Duck," exclaimed the St. Maloite.

"Monsieur," rejoined the Guernsey man, politely, "you have a reply for everything."

"*Malouin malin !* — Saint-Malo men are cunning."

Having made this repartee, the Saint-Malo man winked.

The tourist interposed a question.

"Must we pass all that collection of rocks ?"

"Not at all. We have left it at the sou'-sou'west. It lies behind us.

And the Guernsey man went on, —

"Taking big rocks and small, the Grelets have fifty-seven points."

"And the Minquiers forty-eight," said the Saint Maloan.

Here the dialogue was confined to the Saint-Malo man and the Guernsey man.

"It seems to me, Monsieur de Saint-Malo, that there are three rocks which you have not included."

"I am reckoning them all."

"The Dérée at Maître Island ?"

"Yes."

"And the Maisons?"

"Which are seven rocks in the middle of the Minquiers? Yes."

"I see that you know those rocks."

"If I did not know rocks I should not belong to Saint-Malo."

"It is pleasing to hear the arguments of Frenchmen."

The Saint-Malo man saluted in his turn, and said, —

"The Savages are three rocks."

"And the Monks two."

"And the Duck one."

"The Duck indicates that it is only one."

"No, for the Suarde is four rocks."

"What do you call the Suarde?" asked the Guernsey man.

"What you call the Chouas, we call the Suarde."

"It is not safe to pass between the Chouas and the Duck."

"That is possible only to birds."

"And to fish."

"Not too easily. In heavy weather, they get knocked against the walls."

"There is sand in the Minquiers."

"Around the Maisons (houses)."

"They are eight rocks which are visible from Jersey."

"From the beach of Azette, 'tis true. Not eight, only seven."

"At low tide, one can walk about among the Minquiers."

"No doubt, there is land left bare."

"And the Dirouilles?"

"The Dirouilles have nothing in common with the Minquiers."

"I mean to say that they are dangerous."

"They lie in the direction of Grenville."

"It is evident that you men of Saint-Malo, like us, are fond of navigating in these seas."

"Yes," replied the Saint-Malo man, "with this difference, that we say: 'we have a habit of,' and you say: 'we are fond of.'"

"You are good sailors."

"I am a cattle dealer."

"Who was that famous man from Saint-Malo?"

"Surcouf."

"What other?"

"Duguay-Trouin."

Here the Parisian commercial traveller intervened.

"Duguay-Trouin? He was taken by the English. He was as amiable as he was brave. He managed to please a young Englishwoman. It was she who procured his liberty."

At that moment, a voice of thunder shouted, —

"Thou art drunk!"

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH CAPTAIN CLUBIN DISPLAYS ALL HIS QUALITIES.

EVERY one turned round.

It was the captain addressing the helmsman.

Sieur Clubin was not in the habit of calling any one "thou." For him to hurl such an apostrophe at helmsman Tangrouille, Clubin must have been very angry, or he must have desired to appear so.

An outburst of wrath at the proper time relieves one of responsibility, and sometimes transfers it.

The captain, standing on the bridge, between the two paddle boxes, was gazing steadily at the helmsman. He repeated between his teeth, —

"Drunkard !"

Worthy Tangrouille hung his head.

The fog bank had grown larger. It now occupied nearly half of the horizon. It was advancing in every direction at once ; there is something of the nature of a drop of oil in fog. This fog spread insensibly. The wind bore it on without haste, without noise. It was gradually taking possession of the ocean. It came from the northwest, and the vessel had it on the bows. It was like a vast, vague, moving cliff. It was cut out upon the sea like a wall. There was a definite point where the immense expanse of water entered beneath the fog and disappeared.

This point of entrance into the fog was still about half a league distant. If the wind changed, they might be able to avoid entering the fog ; but it must change at once. The half league interval was filling up and decreasing visibly ; the

Durande was moving forward, the fog was also advancing. It was coming towards the ship, and the ship was going towards it.

Clubin ordered them to put on more steam and sheer off to the east.

In this manner they skirted the fog for a while, but it continued to advance. Nevertheless, the ship was still in the full sunlight.

Time was lost in these manœuvres which could hardly prove successful. Night comes on quickly in February.

The Guernsey man watched the fog. He said to the Saint-Malo man, —

“That’s an ugly fog.”

“A nasty thing at sea,” observed one of the Saint-Malo men.

The other Saint-Malo man added, —

“That’s what spoils a trip.”

The Guernsey man approached Clubin.

“Captain Clubin, I am afraid that we shall get caught in the fog.”

Clubin replied, —

“I wanted to remain at Saint-Malo, but I was advised to sail.”

“Who advised you?”

“Some of the old sailors.”

“In fact,” resumed the Guernsey man, “you did right to sail. Who knows whether there will not be a tempest to-morrow? At this season, one may wait and only find it worse.”

A few minutes later, the *Durande* entered the fog bank.

It was a singular instant. All at once those who were at the stern could not see those who were at the bow. A soft, gray partition cut the boat in two.

Then the whole vessel plunged into the fog. The sun was no longer anything but a sort of exaggerated moon. Every one suddenly began to shiver with the cold. The passengers

put on their overcoats, and the sailors their pea-jackets. The sea, which was almost without a ripple, had the cold menace of tranquillity. It seems as though there were something to be apprehended from this excess of calm. All was wan and pallid. The black smoke stack and the black smoke contended with the livid mist which enshrouded the vessel.

Deviation to the east was henceforth useless, and the captain again directed the ship's head towards Guernsey, and put on more steam.

The Guernsey passenger, as he prowled around the engine-room, heard the negro Imbrancam talking to his mate the fireman. The passenger listened. The negro was saying, —

"This morning, in the sunlight, we went slowly; now, in the fog, we are going fast."

The Guernsey man went back to *Sieur Clubin*.

"Captain *Clubin*, there is no cause for anxiety; but are we not carrying too much steam?"

"What would you have, sir? We must certainly make up for the time lost by that drunkard of a helmsman."

"That is true, Captain *Clubin*."

And *Clubin* added, —

"I am in haste to arrive. The fog is enough, night would be too much."

The Guernsey man rejoined the *Saint-Malo* passengers, and said to them, —

"We have an excellent captain."

At intervals, great surges of fog, which one would have said had been carded, shut down heavily and concealed the sun. Then it reappeared, paler and as though ailing. The little which could be seen of the heavens resembled the strips of painted sky, dirty and spotted with oil, of an old theatrical stage scenery.

The *Durande* passed close to a cutter which had prudently cast anchor. It was the "*Shealtiel*" of Guernsey. The skipper of the cutter noticed the *Durande's* high rate of speed. It also struck him that she was not in her exact course. She

seemed to be bearing too much to the west. This ship under full speed in the fog astonished him.

Towards two o'clock, the fog was so thick that the captain was forced to quit the bridge and get nearer the helmsman. The sun had vanished, all was fog. A sort of white obscurity reigned on board the *Durande*. She sailed in diffused pallor. The sky was no longer visible, neither was the sea.

There was not a breath of wind.

The can of turpentine suspended under the foot bridge between the paddle boxes, did not even oscillate.

The passengers had become silent.

Still the Parisian hummed between his teeth Béranger's song, "*Un jour le bon Dieu s'éveillant*. One day the good God waking."

One of the Saint-Malo passengers addressed him.

"Monsieur comes from Paris?"

"Yes, monsieur. '*Il mit la tête à la fenêtre*. He thrust his head out of the window.'"

"What are they doing in Paris now?"

'*Leur planète a péri peut être*. Their planet may have perished.' Monsieur, in Paris everything is going at sixes and sevens."

"Then it is on land as it is on the sea."

"'Tis true that we have an infernal fog here."

"And one which may cause disasters."

The Parisian exclaimed,—

"But why disasters? in what way disasters? What purpose do disasters serve? 'Tis like the conflagration at the Odéon. That reduced whole families to beggary. Is that just? Stay, sir, I do not know what your religion is, but I am not satisfied."

"Neither am I," said the Saint-Malo man.

"All that happens here below seems to be out of gear. I have an idea that the good God is not in it."

The Saint-Malo man scratched the top of his head, like some one making an effort to understand.

The Parisian continued, —

"The good God is absent. There ought to be a decree to force God to take up his permanent residence here. He is at his country house, and does not trouble himself about us. So everything goes wrong. It is evident, my dear sir, that the good God is no longer at the seat of government, that he is on a vacation, and that the vicar, some seminary angel, some idiot with the wings of a sparrow, is conducting affairs."

Moineau (sparrow) was mispronounced *moigneau*, after the manner of a street arab.

Captain Clubin, who had stepped up to the two talkers, laid his hand on the Parisian's shoulder.

"Hush," said he! "Take heed to your words, sir. We are at sea."

No one uttered another word.

At the expiration of five minutes, the Guernsey man, who had heard all, muttered in the ear of the Saint-Malo man, —

"And a religious captain!"

It was not raining, but their clothing felt damp. They were only sensible of the progress they made through an increase of discomfort. They seemed to be entering into sadness. Fog causes silence on the ocean; it lulls the waves to sleep, and stifles the wind.

Amid that silence, there was something indescribably uneasy and plaintive about the hoarse breathing of the *Durande*.

They no longer met any vessels. If, in the distance, either in the direction of Guernsey or of Saint-Malo, there were still any ships on the sea outside of the fog, the *Durande*, submerged in the fog, was not visible to them, and its long trail of smoke, attached to nothing, produced the effect of a black comet in a white sky.

All at once, Clubin exclaimed, —

"Scoundrel! you have just steered wrong. You want to ruin us. You deserve to be put in irons! Begone, you drunken rascal!"

And he seized the helm.

The humiliated helmsman took refuge among the sailors forward.

The Guernsey man said, —

“We are saved.”

They continued to advance rapidly.

Towards three o'clock, the under part of the fog began to lift, and they saw the sea once more.

“I don't like the looks of that,” said the Guernsey man.

The fog could, in fact, be lifted only by the sun or the wind. If by the sun, it is well; by the wind, it is not so well. Now, it was too late for the sun. The sun grows weak at three o'clock in February. A rise in the wind, at that critical point in the day, is not desirable. It is often the forerunner of a tempest.

However, if there was any breeze, it was hardly perceptible.

Clubin, with his eye on the binnacle, grasping the helm and steering, was muttering between his teeth such words as the following, which reached the passengers' ears, —

“No time to lose. That drunkard has delayed us.”

But his countenance was utterly devoid of expression.

The sea was less calm beneath the fog. Several waves were visible. Patches of glassy light floated by on the water. These patches of light on the waves cause mariners anxiety. They indicate holes pierced by the wind in the ceiling of the fog above. The fog lifted, and closed in again, more dense than ever. At times, the density was complete. The vessel was caught in a regular floe of fog. At intervals, this redoubtable circle opened part way, like a claw, allowed a small view of the horizon, then closed again.

The Guernsey man, armed with his telescope, stood sentinel on the bow of the vessel.

A clearing came, then closed.

The Guernsey man wheeled round thoroughly frightened, —

“Captain Clubin!”

“What's the matter?”

“We are steering straight for the Hanways.”

"You are mistaken," said Clubin, coldly.

The Guernsey man persisted, —

"I am sure of it."

"Impossible."

"I just saw the rocks on the horizon."

"Where?"

"Yonder."

"That is the open sea. Impossible."

And Clubin kept the vessel directed towards the point indicated by the passenger.

The Guernsey man seized his telescope again.

A moment later he ran to the stern.

"Captain!"

"Well?"

"Tack ship."

"Why?"

"I am sure that I have seen a rock, very high and very near. It is the Great Hanway."

"You must have seen some thicker fog bank."

"It is the Great Hanway. Tack ship, in the name of heaven!"

Clubin gave the helm a turn.

CHAPTER V.

CLUBIN PUTS THE FINISHING TOUCH TO ADMIRATION.

A CRASH was heard. The splitting of a vessel's side on a reef in the open sea is one of the most melancholy sounds conceivable. The *Durande* came to a dead halt.

Several passengers were thrown down by the shock, and rolled along the deck.

The Guernsey man raised his hands to heaven.

"On the Hanway! I predicted it."

A long-drawn cry broke out on the vessel.

"We are lost!"

Clubin's voice, dry and curt, dominated the cry.

"No one is lost! Silence!"

Imbrancam's black form, bare to the waist, came up the hatchway leading to the engine-room.

The negro said calmly, —

"Captain, the water is coming into the hold. The fire will soon be out."

It was a frightful moment.

The shock had resembled a suicide. It could not have been more terrible had it been done intentionally. The *Durande* had dashed upon the rock as though attacking it. One point of rock had penetrated the ship like a nail. More than six feet square of her planking had been crushed, the stern was broken, the bow stove in, the open hull drank in the water with a horrible boiling sound. It was a wound through which entered shipwreck. The rebound had broken the pendants of the rudder, which hung loose and beat about. The keel had been stove in by the reef, and around the vessel nothing was

visible but the thick, compact fog, now almost black. Night was fast drawing on.

The *Durande* made a plunge forward. She was like the horse which has the bull's horn in his bowels. She was dead.

The hour of half high tide made itself felt on the sea.

Tangrouille was sobered; no one is drunk during a shipwreck; he went down between decks, came up again, and said, —

"Captain, the water is gaining on the hold. In ten minutes it will be even with the scuppers."

The passengers rushed about the deck in a bewildered manner, wringing their hands, leaning over the rail, staring at the machinery, making all the useless movements of terror. The tourist had fainted away.

Clubin made a sign with his hand, every one became silent. He questioned Imbrancam.

"How much longer can the engine work?"

"Five or six minutes."

Then he questioned the Guernsey passenger.

"I was at the helm. You saw the rock. On which bank of the Hanway are we?"

"On the Mauve. Just now, when it lighted up, I recognized the Mauve perfectly."

"As we are on the Mauve," continued Clubin, "we have the great Hanway on our port side, and the little Hanway on the starboard. We are a mile from the shore.

The crew and passengers listened, quivering with anxiety and attention, their eyes riveted on the captain.

There was no object in lightening the vessel, and, besides, it was impossible. In order to throw the cargo into the sea, they would have been obliged to open the portholes and increase the chances for the water to enter. It would have been useless to cast anchor; they were nailed fast. Moreover, on this bottom, which would have made it impossible to trip the anchor, the chain would probably have parted. As the engine was not injured and could be worked while the fire

was not extinguished, that is to say, for a few minutes longer, they could use the whole force of wheels and steam to move backward and tear themselves from the reef. In that case, they would sink immediately. The rock stopped up the leak to a certain extent, and obstructed the passage of the water. It presented an obstacle. The opening freed, it would be impossible to stop the leaks and free her with pumps. He who withdraws the dagger from a wound in the heart, kills the wounded man on the spot. To disengage themselves from the rock was simply to founder.

The cattle, on being reached by the water in the hold, began to bellow.

Clubin gave the command,—

“Launch the long boat.”

Imbrancam and Tangrouille rushed forward and cast off the lashings. The rest of the crew looked on, petrified.

“All hands to the ropes,” shouted Clubin.

This time all obeyed.

Clubin, impassive, continued, in that ancient language of command which the sailors of the present day would not understand.

“Haul taut! Take a turn if the capstan is clogged! Stop heaving! Slack! Don’t let the blocks of the davit tackle get foul! Lower away! Slack away both ends together, sharp! Together! Look out that it doesn’t go down end first! There’s too much strain! Hold on to the lanyards of the davits! Stand by there!

The long boat was now on the water.

At the same instant, the wheels of the *Durande* stopped, the smoke ceased, the engine was submerged!

The passengers, gliding down the ladder or hanging to the rigging, let themselves drop into the boat rather than descended into it. Imbrancam picked up the fainting tourist, carried him into the boat, then climbed back upon the vessel.

The sailors rushed forward in the rear of the passengers. The cabin boy had fallen under their feet, and they were trampling over him.

Imbrancam barred the passage.

"No one before the lad," said he.

He brushed aside the sailors with his black arms, seized the cabin boy and handed him to the Guernsey passenger, who stood up in the boat to receive him.

The cabin boy saved, Imbrancam stood aside and said to the others, —

"Pass on."

In the meantime, Captain Clubin had gone to his cabin and had made up a package of the papers and instruments belonging on board. He removed the compass from the binnacle. He handed the papers and instruments to Imbrancam, and the compass to Tangrouille, and said to them: "Get into the boat."

They obeyed. The crew had preceded them. The long boat was full, the water was on a level with the gunwales.

"Now," shouted Clubin, "give way."

A cry arose from the long boat.

"And you, captain?"

"I remain here."

Shipwrecked men have but little time for deliberation, and still less for becoming affected. Still, those who were in the boat and in comparative safety, felt an emotion which was not altogether selfish. All voices insisted simultaneously, —

"Come with us, captain."

"I remain."

The Guernsey man, who was used to the sea, replied, —

"Listen, captain. You have run aground on the Hanway. You only need to swim a mile to gain Plainmont. But with a boat one cannot land short of la Rocquaine, and that is two miles. There are breakers, and there is the fog. This long boat will not reach la Rocquaine for two hours to come. It will be a dark night. The sea is rising, the wind is freshening. A storm is at hand. We ask no better than to come back for you, but if heavy weather comes on, we shall not be able. You are lost if you remain. Come with us."

The Parisian interposed, —

“The long boat is full, and over full, it is true, and one man more would be one man too many. But there are thirteen of us, which is bad for the boat, and it is better to overload it with another man than with an unlucky number. Come, captain.”

Tangrouille added, —

“It is wholly my fault, and not yours. It is not right that you should remain.”

“I stay,” said Clubin. “The vessel will be torn in pieces to-night by the tempest. I shall not leave it. When the ship is lost, the captain is dead. It will be said of me: ‘He did his duty to the end.’ Tangrouille, I forgive you.”

And folding his arms, he shouted, —

“Obey orders. Cast off the ropes. Give way.”

The boat began to move. Imbrancam had seized the helm. All hands which were not rowing were raised towards the captain. All mouths shouted: “Hurrah for Captain Clubin!”

“That’s an admirable man,” said the American.

“Monsieur,” replied the Guernsey man, “he’s the most honest sailor afloat.”

Tangrouille wept.

“If I had had any courage,” he muttered, “I should have remained with him.”

The long boat entered the fog and disappeared.

Nothing more was visible.

The splash of the oars decreased and died away.

Clubin remained alone.

CHAPTER VI.

THE INTERIOR OF AN ABYSS ILLUMINATED.

WHEN this man found himself on that rock, beneath that cloud, in the midst of that water, far from all human contact, left for dead, alone between the rising sea and the approaching night, he felt a profound satisfaction.

He had succeeded.

He had realized his dream. The bill of exchange at long date, which he had drawn upon destiny, had been paid over to him.

For him, abandonment meant deliverance. He was on the Hanway, a mile from land; he had seventy-five thousand francs. Never had a more clever shipwreck been accomplished. Nothing had gone wrong. It is true that everything had been foreseen. Clubin, from his youth up, had cherished one idea; to put honesty as his stake on the gaming table of life; to pass for an upright man, and starting from that point to await his chance, let the stakes swell, hit on the best way, divine the moment; not to grope, but to seize; to make one blow, and only one, to end by a sweep-stake, to leave imbeciles behind him. His intention was to succeed once where stupid sharpers fail twenty times in succession, and, while they end on the gallows, to end in a fortune himself. Rantaine once met, had been his illuminating flash. He had immediately mapped out his plan. To force Rantaine to disgorge; to render the latter's possible revelations null and void by disappearing; to pass for dead, the best of all ways of disappearing; to that end was to wreck the *Durande*. This wreck was necessary. Moreover,

to go away leaving a good reputation behind him at his departure, which rendered his whole existence a masterpiece. Any one who had seen Clubin amid this shipwreck would have thought he beheld a demon, and a happy one.

He had lived all his life for that moment.

His whole person expressed these words: "At last!" A frightful serenity rendered that obscure brow pallid. His dull eye, whose depths seemed to be impenetrable, became clear and terrible. The inward fires of that soul were reflected there.

The interior tribunal has its electric phenomena, like external nature. An idea is a meteor; at the moment of success, the accumulated meditations which have preceded it yawn, and a spark flashes forth from it; to possess within one's self the talons of evil and to feel one's prey therein is a happiness which has a radiance of its own; an evil thought triumphing illuminates the face; certain combinations which have been successful, certain objects attained, certain fierce felicities cause lugubrious expansions of light to appear and disappear in the eyes of men. It is a joyful storm, it is a menacing dawn. It proceeds from the conscience which has become a shadow and a cloud.

It lighted up the eyes of this man.

This lightning resembled nothing which is to be seen flashing on high or here below.

The repressed rascality which existed in Clubin was breaking forth.

Clubin gazed at the immense obscurity, and could not restrain a burst of low and sinister laughter.

He was free! he was rich!

His unknown had freed itself at last. He had solved his problem.

Clubin had plenty of time before him. The sea was rising, and consequently it upheld the *Durande*, which it would finally lift. The vessel remained firmly on the reef; there was no danger of her foundering. Moreover, he must allow

the long boat, time to get away, to be lost, perhaps. Clubin hoped so.

Erect on the shipwrecked *Durande*, he folded his arms, enjoying this abandonment in the dark.

Hypocrisy had weighed upon this man for thirty years. He was evil and had coupled himself with probity. He hated probity with the hatred of a man unhappily mated. He had always cherished a rascally intention; since he had attained the age of manhood, he had worn the rigid armor of appearances.

Beneath, he was a monster; he lived in the skin of an honest man with the heart of a bandit. He was a fair-spoken pirate. He was the prisoner of honesty; he was shut up in the mummy-case of innocence, he had worn the wings of an angel, which are so wearisome to a scoundrel. He was overburdened with public esteem. It is hard to pass for an honest man, to think evil and to speak well and to keep all these in equilibrium! He had been the phantom of uprightness, while he was the spectre of crime. This contradiction had been his fate. He had been obliged to assume a plausible countenance, to remain always presentable, to froth in secret, to smile instead of gnashing his teeth. Virtue was for him a stifling thing. He had passed his life in a desire to bite the hand which was laid upon his mouth.

But while wishing to bite it, he had been obliged to kiss it.

To have lied is to have suffered. A hypocrite is a patient in the double acceptance of the word; he calculates a triumph and undergoes a torture. The indefinite premeditating on an evil deed, accompanied by and dosed with austerity; inward infamy seasoned with an excellent reputation, the constant putting of people on the wrong scent, never being one's self, creating an illusion, is fatiguing. To produce candor out of all the black stuff which one grinds over in his brain, to desire to devour those who venerate you, to be caressing, to hold yourself in, to repress yourself, to be always on the alert, to watch yourself incessantly, to put a fair face on your latent crime,

to make your deformity appear beautiful, to fabricate a perfection out of your wickedness, to tickle with the dagger, to put sugar in the poison, to keep a guard over your gestures, and over the music of your voice, not to wear your own look, nothing is more difficult, nothing is more torturing. The odiousness of hypocrisy is obscurely felt by the hypocrite. It is nauseating to drink one's own imposture continually. The sweetness communicated by craft to wickedness, disgusts the wicked man, forced to have this mixture constantly in his mouth, and there are moments of upheaval when hypocrisy is on the point of vomiting forth its secret thought. To be obliged to swallow down that saliva again is horrible. Add to this deep-seated pride. There are strange moments when the hypocrite esteems himself. There is a huge *I* in the scoundrel. The worm crawls in the same manner as the dragon, and has the same manner of rearing to strike. The traitor is only the despot under constraint, who cannot accomplish his will otherwise than by resigning himself to a secondary part. It is littleness capable of enormity. The hypocrite is a dwarfed Titan.

Clubin imagined, in good faith, that he had been ill-used. By what right had not he been born rich? He would have asked no better than to have inherited a hundred thousand livres income from his father and mother. Why had he not inherited it? It was no fault of his. Why had he been deprived of all the enjoyments of life, and forced to toil, that is to say, to deceive, to betray, to destroy? Why, by this means, had they condemned him to this torture of flattering, of crawling, of humoring, of making himself beloved and respected, and of wearing, night and day, another face than his own? To dissimulate is a violence restrained. One hates the person to whom one lies. At last the hour had struck. Clubin was taking his revenge.

On whom? On all, and for everything.

Lethierry had done him nothing but good; a grievance the more; he was avenging himself on Lethierry.

He was taking his revenge on all those before whom he had restrained himself. He was taking his revenge. Whoever had thought well of him was his enemy. He had been the captive of that man.

Clubin was at liberty. His exit was made. He stood outside of men. What they took for his death was his life. It was about to begin. The true Clubin had stripped off the false Clubin. With one blow he had broken every tie. He had kicked Rantaine into space, Lethierry into ruin, human justice into the darkness, opinion into error, all humanity away from himself. He had just eliminated the world.

As for God, that word of three letters troubled him but little.

He had passed for a religious man. Well, what next?

There are caverns in the hypocrite, or to speak more truly, the entire hypocrite is a cavern.

When Clubin found himself alone, his cavern opened. Then came a moment of delight for him, he aired his soul.

He breathed in his crime to the full extent of his lungs.

The very depths of evil were manifested in that visage. Clubin blossomed out. At that moment, Rantaine's look, compared to his, would have seemed like that of a new-born infant.

What a deliverance was that rending away of the mask! His conscience rejoiced at beholding itself hideously naked, and taking without restraint its ignoble bath in evil. The long constraint of human respect ends by inspiring a mad taste for indecency. One comes to a certain lascivious enjoyment in crime. There exists in these frightful moral abysses, so seldom sounded, an atrocious and strangely fascinating revelation, which is the obscenity of crime. The insipidity of false good repute awakens an appetite for shame. They disdain men so much that they would like to be despised by them. They become weary of being esteemed. They admire the first jostling of degradation. They gaze enviously at turpitude, which is so much at ease in ignominy. Eyes low-

ered under obligation, often have these stealthy glances. Nothing is nearer Messalina than Marie Alacoque. Look at la Cadière, and at the nun of Louviers. Clubin, also, had lived under the veil. Effrontery had always been his ambition. He envied the prostitute and the brazen front of accepted opprobrium; he felt himself more of an outcast than she, and had a disgust for passing as immaculate. He had been the Tantalus of cynicism. At last, on this rock, in this solitude, he could be frank; and he was. What voluptuousness to feel himself sincerely abominable! All the ecstasies possible to hell, Clubin experienced at that moment, the arrearages of dissimulation had been paid over to him; hypocrisy is an advance payment; Satan had reimbursed it. Clubin indulged himself in the intoxication of being shameless, since men had disappeared and there was nothing but heaven left. He said to himself: "I am a scoundrel!" and he was satisfied.

Nothing like it had ever taken place in a human conscience.

The irruption of a hypocrite,—no outbreak of a crater is comparable to that.

He was delighted that no one was there, and yet he would not have been displeased if some one had been there. He would have rejoiced in being monstrous before a witness.

He would have been happy to tell the human race to its face: "You are an idiot."

The absence of men assured his triumph, but diminished it.

He had only himself as a spectator of his glory.

Being in the pillory has a certain charm of its own: all the world knows that you are infamous.

To force the crowd to look at you is to exercise an act of power. A convict standing on a platform in a public square, with the iron collar about his neck, is the despot of all the looks which he forces to turn towards him. There is a pedestal on yonder scaffold. What finer triumph than to be the centre of universal attention? To force the public eye to look, is one of the forms of supremacy. To those to whom

evil is the ideal, opprobrium is an aureole. From that point they dominate. They are on the top of something. They display themselves in sovereign fashion. A post which the universe beholds is not without some analogy to a throne.

To be exposed, is to be contemplated.

An evil reign has, evidently, some of the joys of the pillory. Nero burning Rome, Louis XIV. treacherously seizing the Palatinate, the Regent George slowly killing Napoleon, Nicholas assassinating Poland in the face of civilization, must have felt something of the voluptuousness which Clubin now experienced. Something like grandeur is felt by the one who is made the subject of immense execration.

To be unmasked is a defeat, but to unmask one's self is a victory. It is like intoxication, it is like insolent and satisfied impudence, it is a flaunting nakedness which insults everything before it. Supreme happiness.

These ideas seem a contradiction in a hypocrite, and are not. All infamy is consistent. Honey is gall. Escobar borders on the Marquis de Sade. Proof: Léotade. The hypocrite being wickedness complete, has within him the two poles of perversity. He is priest on one side and courtesan on the other. His demoniacal sex is double. The hypocrite is the frightful hermaphrodite of evil. He fructifies himself. He engenders and transforms himself. If you desire him charming, look at him; if you desire him horrible, turn him round.

Clubin had within him that complete gloom of confused ideas. He did not perceive them clearly, but he enjoyed them greatly.

A passage of sparks from hell which one might behold at night, — such was the succession of thoughts in this soul.

Clubin remained in this thoughtful state for some time; he was gazing upon his cast-off honesty with the look which the serpent bestows upon his old skin.

All the world had believed in that honesty, even he himself, to a small extent.

He burst into a second fit of laughter.

They were going to believe that he was dead, and he was rich. They were going to believe that he was lost, and he was saved. What a fine trick played on universal stupidity!

And in that universal stupidity, Rantaine was included. Clubin thought of Rantaine with boundless disdain. The disdain of the weasel for the tiger. That trick in which Rantaine had failed, had succeeded with him. Rantaine had gone off and Clubin was disappearing triumphant. He had substituted himself for Rantaine in the bed of his evil deed, and it was he, Clubin, who had won the price.

As for the future, he had no well-settled plan of action. He had his three bank notes in the iron box enclosed in his girdle; that certainly was sufficient for him. He would change his name. There are countries where sixty thousand francs are worth six hundred thousand. It would not be a bad plan to go and live honestly in one of those nooks, on the money recaptured from that thief of a Rantaine. To speculate, to enter into business on a grand scale, to increase his capital, to become in serious earnest a millionaire,—that would not be a bad thing either.

At Costa Rica, for example, there were tons of money to be made, as the great trade in coffee was now beginning to be developed. He would see about it.

It mattered little, however. There was time to think on the subject. For the moment, the difficult part was accomplished. To despoil Rantaine, to disappear with the Durande, that was the great matter. It was accomplished. The rest was simple. No obstacle was henceforth possible. Nothing to fear, nothing could arise. He was about to swim ashore, at night he would reach Plainmont, he would climb the cliff, he would go straight to the haunted house, he would enter it without difficulty by means of his knotted rope, concealed beforehand in a hole in the rock; he would find in the empty house his valise containing dry clothing and food, and there he could wait, he was resigned to that. A week would not elapse without the Spanish Smugglers, Blasquito, probably, touching at Plainmont; for a

few guineas he would get himself transported, not to Torbay as he had said to Blasco, to throw conjecture off the track and put it on the wrong scent, but to Pasages, or Bilboa. Thence he would reach Vera Cruz or New Orleans. However, the time had come to throw himself into the sea, the launch was far away, an hour's swim was nothing to Clubin, only a mile separated him from the land, since he was on the Hanways.

At this point in Clubin's reverie, there came an opening in the fog. The formidable Douvres rock made its appearance.

CHAPTER VII.

THE UNEXPECTED INTERVENES.

CLUBIN, haggard, gazed at it.

It certainly was the terrible isolated reef.

Impossible to mistake that misshapen outline. The two twin Douvres reared themselves aloft, hideously, allowing a view of their defile, like a trap, between them. One would have pronounced it the cut-throat of the ocean.

They were quite close at hand. The fog had concealed them, like an accomplice.

Clubin had lost his way in the fog. In spite of all his attention, that had happened to him which happened to two other great navigators : to Gonzalez, who discovered Cape Blanco, and to Fernandez, who discovered Cape Verde. The fog had led him astray. It had appeared to him excellent for the execution of his project, but it had its perils. Clubin had veered to the west, and had erred. The Guernsey passenger, by thinking that he recognized the Hanways, had decided the final turn of the helm. Clubin had believed that he was casting himself on the Hanways.

The Durande, broken open by one of the rocks of the reef, was separated from the two Douvres only by a few cable lengths.

Two hundred fathoms further on was a massive cube of granite. On the steep faces of this rock, several furrows and projections for climbing were visible. The rectilinear corners of these rough walls, with their right angles, suggested the presence of a plateau at the top.

It was "The Mar"

The rock of "The Man" rose still higher than the Douvres rocks. Its platform dominated their double and inaccessible point. This platform, while crumbling on the edges, had an entablature, and an indescribable, sculpturalesque regularity. Nothing more desolate and deadly could be imagined. The waves from the open sea lapped tranquilly against the square faces of this enormous black mass, a sort of pedestal for the immense spectres of the sea and of the night.

This aggregate of things was quiet. Hardly a breath in the air, hardly a ripple on the waves. One divined beneath that mute surface of water the vast hidden life of the depths.

Clubin had often seen the Douvres reef from a distance.

He satisfied himself that, in very truth, he was there.

He could not doubt it.

An abrupt and hideous change. The Douvres instead of the Hanways. Instead of one mile, five leagues of sea. Five leagues of sea! the impossible!

The Douvres rock, for the solitary, shipwrecked man, is the presence, visible and palpable, of the last moment. A prohibition of all hope of reaching land.

Clubin shuddered. He had placed himself in the jaws of the shadow. No other refuge than "The Man" rock. It was probable that the tempest would come up during the night, and that the long boat of the *Durande* would founder, as it was overloaded. No news of the shipwrecked man would reach the land. No one would even know that Clubin had been left on the Douvres reef. No other prospect than death from cold and hunger. His seventy-five thousand francs would not procure him a mouthful of bread. All that he had built up had ended in this trap. He was the laborious architect of his own catastrophe. No resource, no safety possible. Triumph had turned into a precipice. Instead of deliverance, a prison. Instead of a long and prosperous future, the death agony. In the twinkling of an eye, quick as a flash of lightning, his whole structure had crumbled. The paradise dreamed of by this demon had resumed its true form, the sepulchre.

In the meantime, the wind had risen. The fog, shaken, riddled with holes, rent, was disappearing towards the horizon in huge, shapeless masses. The whole sea reappeared.

The cattle, more and more invaded by the water, continued to bellow in the hold.

Night was approaching ; probably, the tempest.

The *Durande*, gradually set afloat again by the rising tide, swung from right to left, then from left to right, and began to turn upon the reef as upon a pivot.

The moment could be foreseen when a billow would tear her off, and roll her to rack and ruin.

There was less obscurity than at the moment of the shipwreck. Although the day was more advanced, one could see more clearly. The fog, in departing, had carried away a portion of the darkness. The west was clear of all clouds. The twilight has a great, white sky. This vast reflection lighted the sea.

The *Durande* had run aground on an inclined plane from the stern to the bow. Clubin mounted on the rear of the vessel, which was almost out of water. He fixed his eye intently on the horizon.

The peculiarity of hypocrisy is to be strong in hope. The hypocrite is the man who waits. Hypocrisy is nothing else than a horrible hopefulness, and the foundation of that lie is made of that virtue transformed into a vice.

Strange to say, there is confidence in hypocrisy. The hypocrite trusts himself to some indefinable power in the unknown, which permits evil.

Clubin gazed at the expanse.

The situation was desperate, this sinister soul did not despair.

He said to himself that, after this long fog, the vessels which had remained heaved to or at anchor would resume their course, and that perhaps one would pass on the horizon.

And, in fact, a sail did make its appearance.

It was coming from the east and going to the west.

As it approached, the details of the vessel became outlined. It had but one mast and was sloop-rigged. The bowsprit was almost horizontal. It was a coaster.

In less than half an hour it would pass quite close to the Douvres rock.

Clubin said to himself: "I am saved."

At a moment like the one in which he found himself, one thinks first of life alone.

This coaster was, perhaps, a stranger. Who knows whether it was not one of the smuggling vessels on its way to Plainmont? Who knows whether it was not Blasquito himself? In that case, not only was life safe, but fortune also; and the encounter of the Douvres reef, by hastening the conclusion, by suppressing the waiting in the haunted house, by winding up the adventure on the open sea, would have been a happy incident.

All the certainty of success frantically re-entered this sombre mind.

It is strange with what facility scoundrels believe that success is due to them.

There was but one thing to be done.

The *Durande*, entangled in the rocks, mingled her outline with theirs, was confounded with their indentations, among which she formed only one more feature, and would not suffice, in the little daylight remaining, to attract the attention of the vessel now about to pass.

But a human figure, standing out blackly against the whiteness of twilight, erect on "the Man" rock, and making signals of distress, would be perceived without a doubt. They would send a boat to rescue the shipwrecked man.

"The Man" rock was only two hundred fathoms away. It was a simple matter to swim to it, to climb it was easy.

There was not a minute to be lost.

As the bow of the *Durande* rested on the rock, it was higher than the stern, and the point where Clubin stood was where it was necessary to plunge for the swim.

He began by making a sounding, and he found that under the stern there was a great depth of water. The microscopic shells of foraminiferæ and polycystines which the tallow on the sounding lead brought up were unbroken, which indicated that there existed very hollow rock caverns where the water was always tranquil, however great the surface agitation.

He undressed, leaving his garments on the bridge. He would find clothes on the coaster.

He retained only the leather girdle.

When he was naked, he raised his hand to his belt, rebuckled it, felt of the iron box within it, rapidly studied with his glance the direction which he must follow among the breakers and the waves, in order to reach "the Man" rock, then, throwing himself head foremost, he made his plunge.

As he dived from a height, he plunged deep.

He sank very far into the water, touched the bottom, skirted the submarine rocks for a moment, then struck out for the surface again.

At that moment, he felt himself seized by the foot.

BOOK SEVENTH.

THE IMPRUDENCE OF ASKING QUESTIONS OF A BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

THE PEARL AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PRECIPICE.

A FEW minutes after his brief colloquy with *Sieur Landoys*, *Gilliatt* was at *Saint-Sampson*.

Gilliatt was uneasy and anxious. What had happened?

There was a noise like a frightened beehive in *Saint-Sampson*. Everybody was at his door. The women were indulging in exclamations. There were people who seemed to be relating something, and gesticulating; a group had formed around them. The words: "What a misfortune!" could be heard. Many faces were smiling.

Gilliatt interrogated no one. It was not his nature to put questions. Moreover, he was too much agitated to talk to indifferent persons. He distrusted rumors, he preferred to learn all the facts at once; he went straight to *les Bravées*.

His uneasiness was such that he was not afraid even to enter that house. Besides, the door of the ground-floor room stood wide open on the quay. There was a swarm of men and women on the threshold. Everybody was going in, he went in also.

On entering, he found *Sieur Landoys* leaning against the jamb of the door, and the latter said to him in a low voice, —

"You doubtless know what has happened?"

"No."

"I did not wish to shout it to you in the road. It makes one seem like a bird of ill-omen."

"What is it?"

"The *Durande* is lost."

There was a throng in the room.

The groups were conversing in low tones, as though in a sick chamber.

Those present, the neighbors, curious passers-by, the first comers, kept in a cluster near the door, in a sort of fear, and left unoccupied the end of the room where Mess Lethierry was to be seen standing beside *Déruchette*, who was sitting and in tears.

He was leaning his back against the wall at the end of the room. His sailor's cap fell over his brows. A lock of gray hair hung down upon his cheek. He said nothing. His arms were motionless; he seemed hardly to breathe. He had the look of a lifeless thing placed against the wall.

One felt on looking at him, that he was a man within whom life had just fallen into ruins. The *Durande* being gone, there was no further reason for his existence. He had a soul on the sea, that soul had just gone down. What was he to do now? To rise every morning and go to bed every evening. Never more to await the *Durande*, never more to see her depart, never more to see her return. What is the remnant of an existence without an object? To eat and drink, and what then?

This man had crowned all his works with a masterpiece, and all his self-devotion by a progress. The progress was abolished, the masterpiece was dead. What was the use of living through a few more empty years? There was nothing to do henceforth. At that age one does not begin again; besides, he was ruined. Poor old man!

Déruchette, seated weeping on a chair beside him, held in both her hands one of Mess Lethierry's fists. Her hands were clasped, his fists clenched. Therein lay the shade of difference between the two states of despondency. In clasped

hands, there is something which still hopes ; in the clenched fist, nothing.

Mess Lethierry abandoned his arm to her and let her do what she would. He was passive. Henceforth he had only that measure of life which one can have after the stroke of a thunderbolt.

There are certain plunges to the bottom of the abyss which withdraw you from among the living. The people who go and come in your chamber are confused and indistinct ; they touch you without reaching you. You are unapproachable to them and they are accessible to you. Happiness and despair are not the same respirable centres ; when one is in despair, one looks on at the life of others from a distance, one almost ignores their presence ; one loses the consciousness of one's own existence ; it is in vain that one is flesh and blood ; one no longer feels real ; one becomes no longer anything but a dream to one's self.

Mess Lethierry's look indicated that condition.

The groups whispered together. They exchanged what they knew. This was the news.

The Durande had been lost the day before on the Douvres, in the fog, about one hour before sunset. With the exception of the captain, who had not consented to leave the vessel, all the people had escaped in the long boat. A squall from the southwest, which had followed the fog, had come near wrecking them a second time, and had driven them out to sea beyond Guernsey. During the night they had had the good fortune to encounter the "Cashmere" which had picked them up and brought them to Guernsey. It was all the fault of the helmsman, Tangrouille, who was in prison. Clubin had behaved nobly.

The pilots, who were numerous in the group, uttered the words : "The Douvres Reef," in a peculiar manner. "A bad inn !" said one of them.

On the table were seen a compass and a bundle of registers and note books ; they were no doubt, the compass of the

Durande, and the vessel's papers intrusted by Clubin to Imbrancam and Tangrouille at the moment of the long boat's departure; a magnificent abnegation on the part of that man, to save even the records at the moment when he was allowing himself to be lost; a small detail full of grandeur, sublime self-forgetfulness.

Admiration for Clubin was unanimous, and unanimous also, was the belief that he had been saved after all. The coaster "Shealtiel" had arrived a few hours after the "Cashmere"; it was this coaster which brought the latest information, she had just passed twenty-four hours in the same waters as the Durande. She had lain to during the fog and had tacked during the squall. The skipper of the "Shealtiel" was among those present.

At the moment when Gilliatt entered, this skipper had just finished his report to Mess Lethierry. This report was a correct one. Towards morning, the storm having abated, and the wind become mild, the skipper of the "Shealtiel" had heard bellowing on the open sea. This sound of the meadows, in the midst of the waves, had surprised him; he had directed his course towards it. He had perceived the Durande on the Douvres rocks. The calm had allowed him to approach. He had hailed the wreck. The bellowing of the cattle who were drowning in the hold had been the sole response. The skipper was certain that there was no one on board the Durande. The wreck still held together; and, violent as had been the squall, Clubin could have passed the night there. He was not a man to let go his hold easily. He was not there, hence he had been saved. Many sloops and luggers from Granville and Saint-Malo, when coming out from the fog on the preceding evening, must have passed quite close to the Douvres reef. One of them had evidently picked up Captain Clubin. It must be remembered that the long boat of the Durande had been full when it quitted the shipwrecked vessel, that it was about to run many risks, that one man more would have overloaded her and might have caused her to founder, and it was

this chiefly which had decided Clubin to remain on the wreck; but his duty once fulfilled and a rescuing vessel having presented itself, Clubin had undoubtedly made no scruples about profiting by it. One may be a hero, but one is not a fool. A suicide would have been all the more absurd since Clubin was not to blame. The culprit was Tangrouille, and not Clubin. All this was conclusive; the skipper of the "Shealtiel" was evidently right, and every one expected to see Clubin make his appearance again at any moment. They planned to carry him about in triumph.

Two certainties followed from this recital of the skipper; that Clubin had been saved, and the *Durande* lost.

As far as the *Durande* was concerned, one must make up one's mind to it, the catastrophe was irremediable. The skipper of the "Shealtiel" had been present at the last scene in the shipwreck. The extremely pointed rock on which the *Durande* was, in a manner, nailed had held good all night, and had resisted the shock of the tempest as though it wished to keep the wreck for itself; but in the morning, at the moment when the "Shealtiel," having ascertained that there was no one on board to save, was on the point of leaving the *Durande*, there had come one of those massive waves which are like the final bursts of a tempest's wrath. This billow had lifted the *Durande* furiously, had torn her from the reef, and had hurled her between the two *Douvres* rocks with the swiftness and directness of an arrow. A "diabolical" crash was heard, the skipper said. The *Durande*, borne to a certain height by the surges, had been plunged in between the rocks up to her midship frame. She had been fastened afresh, but more solidly than on the submarine reef. There she was destined to remain, deplorably suspended, surrendered to all the fury of the wind and of the sea.

The *Durande*, according to the statements of the crew of the "Shealtiel," was already three quarters broken up. She would evidently have sunk during the night, had not the reef sustained her and prevented. The skipper of the "Shealtiel"

had studied the wreck with his glass. He gave the details of the disaster with the precision of a mariner; the starboard quarter was stove in, the masts were snapped off, the canvas blown out of the bolt ropes, the shrouds almost cut through, the skylights of the cabin crushed by the fall of a yard, the uprights broken off level with the gunwale, from abreast of the main mast to the taffrails, the dome of the steward's room stove in, the chocks of the long-boat carried away, the round house dismounted, the rudder hinges broken, the tiller-ropes detached, the sheathing torn off, the bitts carried away, the cross beams destroyed, the rail gone, the stern post smashed. All this was the frenzied devastation of the tempest. Of the hoisting crane bolted to the foremast there was nothing left, a complete cleaning-out, gone all to pieces, with its hoisting tackle, its blocks and falls, its snatch block, and its chains. The *Durande* was dismembered; the sea was now about to tear her to pieces. In a few days, nothing would be left of her.

Nevertheless, the engine, a remarkable fact, and one which proved its excellence, had hardly been affected amid these ravages. The skipper of the "*Shealtiel*" thought he could affirm that the "crank" had suffered no serious injury. The masts of the vessel had yielded, but the smoke stack of the engine had resisted. The iron guards of the captain's bridge were merely twisted. The paddle-boxes had suffered, the framework had been crushed, but the wheels did not seem to lack a single float. The engine was uninjured. This was the conviction of the skipper of the "*Shealtiel*." The engineer, Imbrancam, who had joined the groups, shared this conviction. This negro, more intelligent than many a white man, was proud of the engine. He raised his arms, with the ten fingers of his black hands outspread, and said to the dumb Lethierry: "Master, the machinery still lives."

As Clubin's safety seemed to be assured, and the hull of the *Durande* having been sacrificed, the engine became the topic of conversation among the groups. They took an interest in it as in a person. They marvelled at its good behavior.

"That's a solid creature!" said a French sailor.

"It's a good thing!" exclaimed a Guernsey fisherman.

"It must have been clever," interposed the captain of the "Shealtiel," "to get out of that scrape with only two or three scratches."

Little by little this engine became their sole preoccupation. Opinions became warm for and against it. It had friends and enemies. More than one, who had a good old sailing coaster, and who hoped to get back the *Durande's* customers, was not sorry to see the *Douvres* reef execute justice on the new invention. The whispering became louder. They discussed almost noisily, still, it was somewhat restrained, and at intervals there came a sudden lowering of voices, under the oppression of *Lethierry's* sepulchral silence.

The result of the colloquies proceeding in all quarters was as follows:—

The engine was the essential point. It was possible to rebuild the vessel, but not the machinery. To construct another like it, money would be lacking; still more serious, the builders would be lacking. It was called to mind that the builder of the engine was dead. It had cost forty thousand francs. No one in the future would risk such a sum against such a catastrophe; the more so as it had now been proved that steamers could be lost as well as sailing vessels; the present accident to the *Durande* had destroyed the prestige of all her past success. Nevertheless, it was deplorable to reflect that at that very hour this machinery was still entire and in good condition, and that, in five or six days, it would be dashed in pieces like the vessel. As long as it existed there was, so to speak, no shipwreck. The loss of the engine was alone irremediable. To save the engine would be to repair the disaster.

It was easy to say, save the engine. But who would undertake it? Was it possible?

To plan and to execute are two different things, and the proof is, that it is easy to dream but difficult to perform. Now, if there ever had been a mad and impracticable dream,

it was this; to save the engine wrecked on the Douvres. To send a vessel and crew to work on those rocks would be absurd; it was not to be thought of. It was the season of heavy seas; at the first gale, the anchor chains would be sawn asunder by the submarine crests of the rocks, and the vessel would be dashed upon the reef. It would be sending a second shipwreck to the relief of the first. In the hollow of the upper plateau, where the legendary shipwrecked man who had perished of hunger had taken refuge, there was barely room for one man. In order, therefore, to save this engine, it would be necessary for one man to go to the Douvres rock and to go there alone, alone in that sea, alone in that desert, alone five leagues from the shore, alone in that horror, alone for whole weeks together, alone in the presence of the foreseen and the unforeseen; without fresh supplies in the anguish of destitution, without succor in the hour of distress, with no other trace of humanity than that of the ancient shipwrecked wight who had perished there of misery, with no other companionship than that of death. And, besides, how would he set about saving the engine? He must not only be a sailor but a machinist. And amid what difficulties, The man who should attempt that would be more than a hero. He would be a madman. For, in certain vast enterprises when the superhuman seems necessary, bravery is little less than madness. And in fact, after all, would it not be unreasonable to sacrifice one's self for old iron? No. No one would go to the Douvres rocks. The machinery must be given up as well as the rest. The desired deliverer would not present himself. Where was such a man to be found?

This, a little differently expressed, constituted the foundation of all the remarks murmured in that crowd.

The skipper of the "Shealtiel," who was an old pilot, summed up the thought of all in this exclamation, uttered in a loud voice,—

"No! It is all over. The man who would go there and bring back that machinery does not exist."

"If I do not go," said Imbrancam, "it is because it cannot be done."

The skipper of the "Shealtiel" shook his left hand with that abruptness which expresses the conviction that a thing is impossible, and resumed, —

"If he existed —"

Déruchette turned her head.

"I would marry him," said she.

A silence ensued.

A very pale man stepped out from the midst of the groups, and said, —

"You would marry him, Miss Déruchette?"

It was Gilliatt.

Meanwhile, all eyes had been raised. Mess Lethierry had just straightened himself up erect. A strange light gleamed beneath his brows.

With his fist he grasped his sailor's cap and flung it to the floor, then he gazed solemnly before him, without seeing any of the persons present, and said, —

"Déruchette shall marry him. I give my word of honor on it, before the good God."

CHAPTER II.

MUCH ASTONISHMENT ON THE WESTERN COAST.

THE following night the moon rose at ten o'clock. Nevertheless, however good the appearance of the night, the wind, and the sea, no fisherman dreamed of setting out either from Hogue la Pierre, or Bourdeaux, or from Houmet Benet, or from le Platon, or from Port-Grat, or from Vason Bay, or from Perrelle Bay, or from Pezeris, or from le Tielles, or from the Bay of les Saints, or from Petit Bô, or from any port or small harbor of Guernsey. And this was quite simple. The cocks had crowed at midday.

When the cock crows at an unusual hour, the catch of fish fails.

Nevertheless, that evening at nightfall, a fisherman who was returning to Omptolle had a surprise. Off Houmet-Paradis, beyond the two Brayes and the two Grunes, with the beacon of the Plattes-Fougères, in the form of a reversed funnel, on the right, and the beacon of Saint-Sampson, which represents the figure of a man, on the left, he thought that he perceived a third beacon. What beacon was this? When had it been placed on that point? What shoals did it indicate? The beacon immediately answered these questions, it moved; it was a mast. The fisherman's astonishment did not diminish. A beacon suggested a question; a mast was much more suggestive. No fishing was possible. Some one was going out when everybody else was coming in. Who? Why?

Ten minutes later the mast, advancing slowly, came within a short distance from the fisherman of Omptolle. He could not recognize the vessel. He heard the sound of rowing

There was the noise of two oars. Hence, it was probably a man alone. The wind was from the north; this man was evidently rowing to catch the wind beyond Point Fontenelle. There, he would, probably, hoist his sail. Hence he intended to double Ancresse and Mont Crevel. What was the meaning of this?

The mast passed by, the fisherman ran into harbor.

That same night, chance observers on the west coast of Guernsey, scattered and isolated, made remarks at different hours and at various points.

Just as the Omptolle fisherman had finished mooring his boat, a carter of seaweed half a mile farther on, as he whipped up his horses in the deserted road of Clôtures, near the Cromlech, in the vicinity of Martello Towers six and seven, saw a sail being hoisted on the water, far away on the horizon, in a spot which was little frequented because it was necessary to know it well, towards la Roque-Norde and la Sablonneuse. He paid but little attention to it, however, being intent on his cart and not on boats.

Half an hour, perhaps, had elapsed after the carter perceived this sail, when a plasterer, returning from his work in the town and passing round the Pelée pool, suddenly found himself almost opposite a boat very audaciously making its way among the rocks of the Quenon, the Rousse de Mer, and the Gripe de Rousse. The night was black, but the sea was light, an effect which is frequently produced, and one can then distinguish vessels going and coming on the water. There was no other boat on the sea, except this one.

A little lower down and a little later, a lobster-man, arranging his pots on the sand which separates Port-Soif (Port Thirst) from Port-Enfer (Port Hell), could not understand the manœuvres of a boat gliding between the Boue-Corneille and the Moulrette. A man must be a good pilot, and in great haste to reach his destination, to risk himself there.

As eight o'clock was sounding at the Catel, the innkeeper of Cobo Bay observed, with some bewilderment, a sail beyond

the Boue du Jardin and the Grunettes, very near la Suzanne and the Grunes de l'Ouest.

Not far from Cobo Bay, on the solitary point of Houmet on the Vason Bay, two lovers were parting and holding each other back; at the moment when the girl was saying to the youth: "If I go away, 'tis not because I do not like to be with you, but because I have my chores to attend to," their attention was diverted from their parting kiss by a rather large boat which passed by very near them, and directed its course towards the Messellettes.

Monsieur le Peyre des Norgiots, who lived at Cotillon-Pipet, was busy about nine o'clock in the evening in examining a hole made by marauders in the hedge of his garden, la Jennerotte, and in his "double ladder planted with trees;" as he observed the damage, he could not help noticing a boat rashly doubling Crocq-Point at that hour of the night.

This was a very hazardous course on the day after a tempest, and with the agitation still remaining in the sea. One was imprudent to select it, unless one knew the channels by heart.

At half past nine, at l'Équerrier, a trawler bringing in his net halted for some time to watch something which must be a boat, between Colombelle and la Souffleresse. This boat was exposing itself greatly. There are sudden and very dangerous gusts of wind there. The "Souffleresse" or Blower rock is so named because it blows unexpectedly on vessels.

At the moment when the moon rose, the tide was full and the sea being spread out in the little strait of Li-Hou, the solitary keeper of the island of Li-Hou was greatly startled; he saw a long, black object pass between him and the moon. That lofty, black, narrow form resembled a winding-sheet, erect and walking. It glided slowly along the top of the sort of wall formed by the piles of rocks. The guardian of Li-Hou thought he recognized the Black Lady.

The White Lady inhabits the Tau de Pez d'Amont, the Gray Lady inhabits the Tau de Pez d'Aval, the Red Lady inhabits the Filleuse, to the north of the Banc-Marquis, and the Black

Lady inhabits the Grand-Etaaré to the west of Li-Houmet. At night, by moonlight, these ladies come out, and sometimes meet.

This black form might, possibly, be a sail. The long bars of rocks over which it seemed to be walking might, in reality, conceal the hull of a boat sailing behind them, and allow the sail only to be seen. But the guardian asked himself what boat would dare to risk itself at that hour between Li-Hou and la Pécheresse, and the Angullièrès and Lérée Point. And with what object? It appeared more probable to him that it was the Black Lady.

Just as the moon had passed the bell tower of Saint-Pierre du Bois, the guard of the Château Rocquaine, as he raised the half of the drawbridge, distinguished at the mouth of the bay, further on than la Haute-Carrée, nearer than la Sambule, a sailing vessel which seemed to be going from north to south.

On this southern coast of Guernsey, there exists, behind Plainmont, at the bottom of a bay, all composed of precipices and rocks, rising perpendicularly from the waves, a singular port which a Frenchman who had sojourned in the island ever since 1855, the same, possibly, as he who writes these lines, had baptized as the "Port on the Fourth Story," a name generally adopted at the present day. This port, which was then called the Moie, is a rock plateau, half natural, half hewn out, elevated about forty feet above the level of the water, and communicating with the waves by two great, parallel beams on an inclined plane. Boats, hoisted by sheer strength of arm by chains and pulleys, mount from the sea and descend again along these beams which are like two rails. There is a staircase for men. This port was greatly frequented at that time by smugglers. Not being very practicable, it was convenient for them.

Towards eleven o'clock, some smugglers, perhaps the very ones on whom Clubin had reckoned, were standing with their bales on the summit of this platform of la Moie. He who smuggles is on the lookout; they were on the alert. They

were astonished by a sail which suddenly appeared beyond the black silhouette of Cape Plainmont. The moon was shining. These smugglers watched that sail, fearing that it was some coastguard boat on its way to station itself in ambush behind the great Hanway. But the sail passed the Hanways, left the Boue-Blondel behind it on the northwest, and then disappeared in the open sea, amid the pale shadows of the mists on the horizon.

"Where the devil can that boat be going?" said the smugglers to each other.

That same evening, a little after sunset, some one was heard to knock at the door of the *Bû de la Rue*. It was a young man dressed in brown with yellow stockings, which indicated a junior clerk of the parish. The *Bû de la Rue* was closed, door and shutters. An old woman, a fisher of the fruits of the sea, who was prowling about the bank with a lantern, hailed the youth, and these words were exchanged by the fishwife and the junior clerk, in front of the *Bû de la Rue*.

"What do you want, young man?"

"The man who lives here."

"He's not here."

"Where is he?"

"I don't know."

"Will he be here to-morrow?"

"I don't know."

"Has he gone away?"

"I don't know."

"You see, my good woman, the new rector of the parish, the Reverend Ebenezer Caudray, would like to call on him."

"I don't know."

"The reverend gentleman has sent me to inquire whether the man of the *Bû de la Rue* will be at home to-morrow?"

"I don't know."

CHAPTER III.

TEMPT NOT THE BIBLE.

DURING the next twenty-four hours, Mess Lethierry did not sleep, did not eat, did not drink, kissed Déruchette's brow, inquired after Clubin, of whom no news had yet been received, signed a declaration to the effect that he did not intend to present any complaint, and caused Tangrouille to be set at liberty.

He remained the whole of the following day half leaning on the table of the office of the Durande, neither standing nor seated, replying gently when any one spoke to him. Moreover, curiosity having been gratified, solitude reigned at les Bravées. There is much inquisitiveness mingled with eagerness to express sympathy. The door was closed again; Lethierry was left alone with Déruchette. The flash which had gleamed in Lethierry's eyes had died out; the melancholy gaze which he had worn at the beginning of the catastrophe, had returned to him.

Déruchette, who was troubled, had, on the advice of Grâce and Douce, and without saying anything, placed on the table beside him a pair of stockings which he had been engaged in knitting when the news arrived.

He smiled bitterly and said, —

“So they think me a fool.”

After a quarter of an hour of silence, he added, —

“These hobbies are good when one is happy.”

Déruchette put away the stocking, and took advantage of the occasion also to remove the compass and the ship's papers, which occupied too much of Mess Lethierry's attention.

In the afternoon, a little before tea time, the door opened and two men entered, clad in black, one old, the other young.

Both these men had a grave air, but their gravity was different; the old man had what may be called state gravity, the young man had natural gravity. Habit gives one; thought, the other.

They were, as their garments indicated, two ecclesiastics, both belonging to the established church.

What would have struck the observer at first sight, about the young man was the gravity, which was profound, in his glance, and which evidently resulted from his mind and not from his person. Gravity admits of passion and exalts it by purifying it, but this young man was, first of all, handsome. Although a priest, he was less than twenty-five years old; he seemed to be eighteen. He presented this harmony and also this contrast; a soul which seemed made for exalted passion and a body for love. He was fair, rosy, fresh, very dainty and very graceful in his severe costume, with cheeks like those of a young girl, and delicate hands; he had a lively and natural though subdued air. Everything about him was charm, elegance, and almost voluptuousness. The beauty of his glance corrected this excess of grace. His sincere smile, which displayed the delicate teeth of a child, was pensive and devotional. He had the gracefulness of a page, and the dignity of a bishop.

Beneath his thick blond hair, so golden that it appeared coquettish, his brow was lofty, honest, and well formed. A slight wrinkle with a double curve between his eyebrows, awoke in a confused way the idea of the bird of thought soaring with outspread wings in the centre of this forehead.

One felt, on seeing him, that he was one of those kindly, pure, and innocent beings, whose progress is in inverse sense with that of vulgar humanity, whom illusion renders wise, and of whom experience makes enthusiasts.

His transparent youth allowed his inward maturity to be seen. Compared with the gray-haired ecclesiastic who accom-

panied him, at the first glance he seemed to be the son, at the second glance he seemed to be the father.

This latter was no other than Doctor Jaquemin Hérode.

Doctor Jacquemin Hérode belonged to the High Church, which is very nearly the same as a papacy without a pope. Anglicanism was distracted at about that epoch by tendencies which have since been affirmed and condensed in Puseyism. Doctor Jaquemin Hérode was of that shade of Anglicanism which is almost a variety of Romanism. He was tall, correct, narrow, and superior. His inner sight hardly pierced to the outside. In place of the spirit, he had the letter. Moreover, he was haughty. His presence was imposing. He seemed less like a "Reverend" than a monsignor. His coat was cut a little like a cassock. His true place would have been Rome. He was a born prelate of the ante-chamber. He seemed to have been created expressly to ornament a pope, and to walk behind the gestatory chair with all the pontifical court, *in abitto paonazzo*. The accident of having been born an Englishman, and a theological education turned more towards the Old Testament than the New, had caused him to miss that great destiny. All his splendors were summed up in this: to be Rector of Saint-Pierre-Port, Dean of the Island of Guernsey and Surrogate of the Bishop of Winchester. This was, not without glory.

This glory did not prevent Jaquemin Hérode from being a very good sort of man, take him all in all.

As a theologian, he held a good place in the esteem of good judges, and he almost constituted an authority in the Court of Arches, that Sorbonne of England.

He had an air of learning, a knowing and peculiar way of winking his eyes, hairy nostrils, prominent teeth, a thin upper and a thick lower lip, many diplomas, a great stipend, baronets for friends, the confidence of his bishop, and a Bible always in his pocket.

Mess Lethierry was so completely absorbed, that all the effect produced by the entrance of the two priests was an imperceptible frown.

Mr. Jaquemin Hérode advanced, bowed, referred to his recent promotion in a few soberly lofty words, and said that he was come, in accordance with custom, "to introduce" to the notable men, and to Mess Lethierry in particular, his successor in the parish, the new rector of Saint-Sampson, the Reverend Joë Ebenezer Caudray, henceforth Mess Lethierry's pastor.

Déruchette rose.

The young priest, who was the Reverend Ebenezer, bowed.

Mess Lethierry stared at M. Ebenezer Caudray and muttered between his teeth: "a bad sailor."

Grace brought forward chairs. The two reverend gentlemen seated themselves near the table.

Doctor Hérode began a speech. He had heard that an event had occurred. The Durande had been shipwrecked. As a pastor, he was come to offer his consolation and advice. This shipwreck was unfortunate, but also fortunate. Let us examine ourselves; were we not puffed up with prosperity? The waters of felicity are dangerous, we must not take misfortunes in bad part. The ways of the Lord are unknown to us. Mess Lethierry was ruined. Well? to be rich is a danger. One has false friends. Poverty removes them. One remains alone. *Solus eris*. The Durande brought in, it was said, a thousand pounds sterling a year. That is too much for the wise man. Let us fly temptation, let us disdain gold. Let us accept neglect and ruin with gratitude. Isolation is full of fruits. One obtains grace from the Lord. It was in this solitude that Ajah found the hot springs while leading the asses of his father Zibeon. Let us not rebel against the inscrutable decrees of Providence. Job, that holy man, after his misery had increased in riches. Who knows whether the loss of the Durande would not have its compensations, even temporal? For instance, he, Jaquemin Hérode, had invested capital in a very fine project now in course of execution in Sheffield; if Mess Lethierry wished to embark in this affair the funds which remained to him, he would repair his fortune; it was a great contract of arms for the czar, who was preparing to subdue Poland. One could make three hundred per cent.

The word *tzar* appeared to arouse Lethierry. He interrupted Doctor Hérode.

"I'll have nothing to do with the *tzar*."

The Reverend Hérode replied, —

"Mess Lethierry, princes are permitted of God. It is written: 'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.' The *tzar* is Cæsar."

Lethierry, who had half fallen back into his dream, muttered, —

"Who is Cæsar? I don't know him."

The Reverend Jaquemin Hérode resumed his exhortation. He did not insist upon Sheffield. To wish to have nothing to do with Cæsar is to be a republican. The reverend gentleman comprehended that one might be a republican. In that case, let Mess Lethierry turn his attention towards a republic. Mess Lethierry could retrieve his fortune in the United States still better than in England. If he wished to increase what remained to him tenfold, he had only to take shares in a great company for developing plantations in Texas, which employed more than twenty thousand negroes.

"I'll have nothing to do with slavery," said Lethierry.

"Slavery," replied the reverend Hérode, "is a sacred institution. It is written: 'If the master smite his slave, he shall not be punished, for he is his money.'"

Grâce and Douce who were in the doorway, were drinking in the words of the reverend rector with a sort of ecstasy.

The reverend gentleman continued: he was, take him all in all, as we have already said, a good man; and whatever might have been his disagreements as to caste, or persons, with Mess Lethierry, he had come very sincerely, to bring him all the spiritual, and even temporal aid, which he, Doctor Jaquemin Hérode, had at his command.

If Mess Lethierry was ruined to such an extent that he could not coöperate advantageously with any Russian or American speculation, why did not he enter the government service, where there were salaried positions? There are fine places,

and the reverend gentleman was ready to recommend Mess Lethierry to them. The office of deputy-judge was at that moment vacant in Jersey. Mess Lethierry was esteemed and beloved, and the Reverend Hérode, Dean of Guernsey and surrogate of the Bishop, would do his utmost to obtain for Mess Lethierry the place of député-vicomte of Jersey. The député-vicomte is an officer of importance; he assists as representative of His Majesty, at the courts of assize, at the debates of the sessions-house, and at the execution of the decrees of justice.

Lethierry fixed his eyes on Doctor Hérode.

"I don't like hanging," said he.

Doctor Hérode, who, up to that point had pronounced all his words with the same intonation, was now seized with a fit of severity, and used a new inflection.

"Mess Lethierry, the death penalty is divinely ordained. God has given the sword in charge to man. It is written: 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.'"

The Reverend Ebenezer drew his chair imperceptibly nearer to the chair of the Reverend Jaquemin, and said to him in a manner to be heard by him alone, —

"What this man says is dictated to him."

"By whom? By what?" demanded the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode.

Ebenezer replied in a very low tone, —

"By his conscience."

The Reverend Hérode fumbled in his pocket, pulled out a thick 18mo bound with clasps, laid it on the table and said aloud, —

"Conscience is here."

The book was a Bible.

Then Doctor Hérode became milder. His desire was to be useful to Mess Lethierry, whom he held in high esteem. It was his right and duty as pastor, to give counsel, but Mess Lethierry was free.

Mess Lethierry, again taken possession of by his absorption

and his grief, no longer listened. Déruchette seated near him and also pensive, did not raise her eyes, and mingled with that conversation the quantity of embarrassment which is afforded by a silent presence. A witness who says nothing is a sort of indefinable weight. However, Doctor Hérode did not seem conscious of it.

As Lethierry made no further replies, Doctor Hérode allowed himself full swing. Counsel comes from man, and inspiration from God. In counsel, said the priest, there is inspiration. It is good to accept counsels, and bad to reject them. Sochoth was seized by eleven devils for having disdained the admonitions of Nathaniel. Tiburianus was struck with leprosy because he thrust the apostle Andrew from his house. Barjesus, magician as he was, became blind for laughing at the words of St. Paul: Elxai and his sisters, Martha and Marthana are in hell at the present hour for having despised the warnings of Valencianus, who proved to them as clearly as the day, that their Jesus Christ, thirty-eight leagues in height, was a demon. Oolibama, who is also called Judith, obeyed counsel. Reuben and Peniel hearkened to counsel from on high; their names alone suffice to indicate this. Reuben signifies "son of the vision," and Peniel signifies "the face of God."

Mess Lethierry struck his fist upon the table.

"Parbleu!" he cried, "it was my own fault."

"What do you mean?" asked the Reverend Jaquenim Hérode.

"I say that it was my fault."

"What was your fault?"

"Because I allowed the Durande to return on Friday."

M. Jaquenim Hérode murmured in the ear of M. Ebenezzer Caudray: "This man is superstitious."

He continued, raising his voice, and in the tone of instruction,—

"Mess Lethierry, it is puerile to believe in Friday. One must not lend faith to fables. Friday is a day like any other.

It is frequently a most auspicious date. Melendez founded the city of Saint Augustine on a Friday; it was on a Friday that Henry VII. gave his commission to John Cabot; the pilgrims of the 'Mayflower' arrived at Provincetown on Friday; Washington was born on Friday, the twenty-second of February, 1732; Christopher Columbus discovered America on Friday, Oct. 12, 1492."

Having said this, he rose.

Ebenezer, whom he had brought with him, also rose.

Grâce and Douce, divining that the reverend gentlemen were about to take their leave, opened both leaves of the door.

Mess Lethierry saw nothing, and heard nothing.

M. Jaquemin Hérode said in an aside to M. Ebenezer Caudray: "He does not even salute us. It is not grief, it is stolidity. We must believe that he has lost his mind."

But he took his little Bible from the table, and held it between his two outstretched hands, as one would hold a bird fearing lest it should fly away. This attitude awakened a certain expectation among the persons present. Grâce and Douce thrust in their heads.

His voice did its utmost to be majestic.

"Mess Lethierry, let us not part without reading a page of the holy book. The situations of life are illuminated by books; the profane use the "*Sortes Virgilianæ*," believers take scriptural warnings. The first book at hand, opened at random, gives counsel; the Bible, opened at random, makes a revelation. It is above all, good for the afflicted. That which infallibly springs forth from the Holy Scriptures softens their affliction. In the presence of the afflicted, the holy book must be consulted without choosing the place, and the passage upon which one alights must be read with candor. What man does not choose, God chooses. God knows what we need. His invisible finger is on the unexpected passage which we read. Whatever be the page, light infallibly proceeds from it. Let us seek no other, let us cling fast to that. It is the word from

on high. And destiny is mysteriously revealed to us in the text invoked with confidence and respect. Let us listen and obey. Mess Lethierry, you are in sorrow, this is the book of consolation; you are ailing, this is the book of health."

The Reverend Jaquemin Hérode pressed the spring of the clasp, slipped his nail at a venture between two pages, laid his hand for a moment on the open book, and collected himself, then, dropping his eyes authoritatively, he began to read in a loud voice.

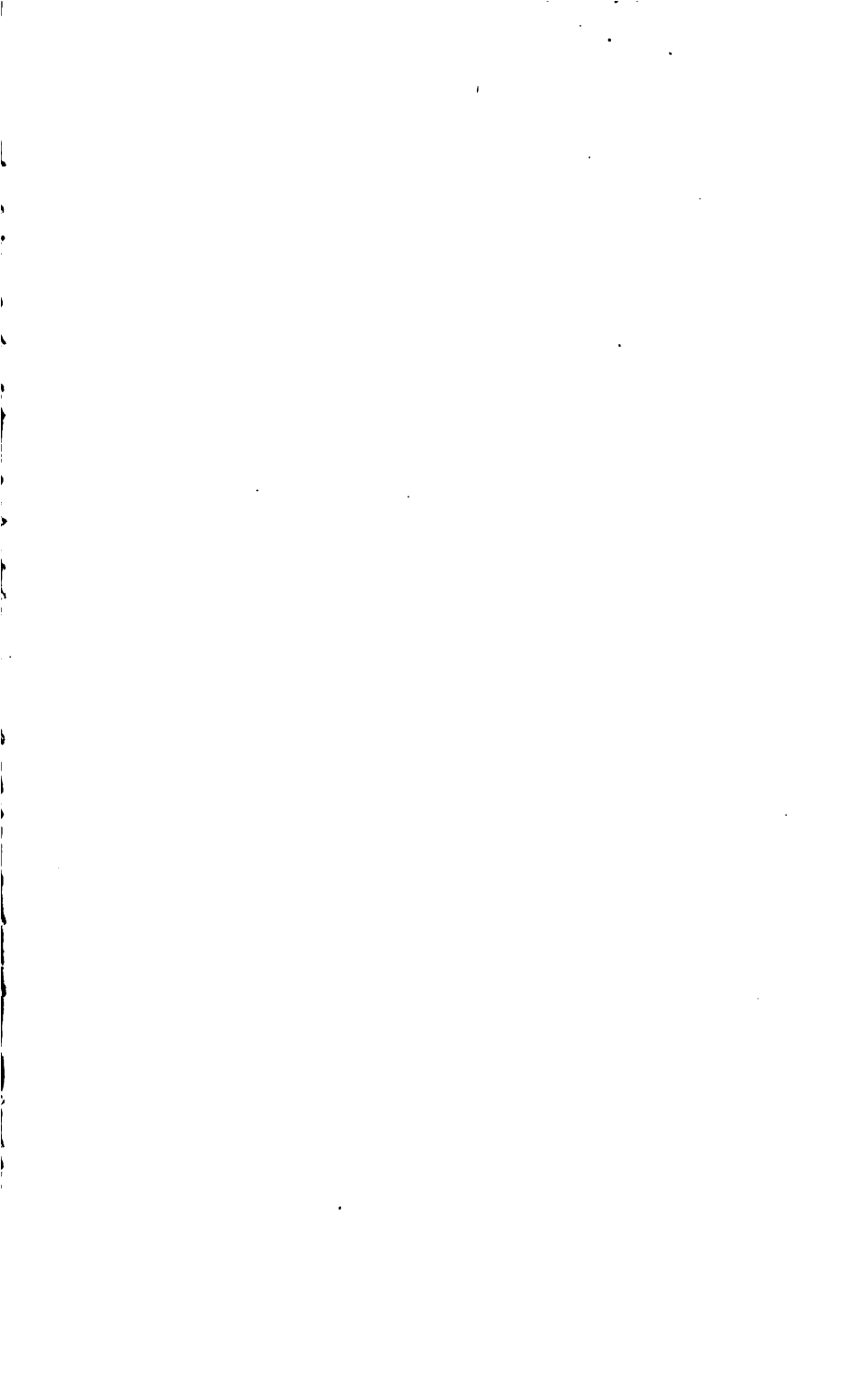
What he read was as follows, —

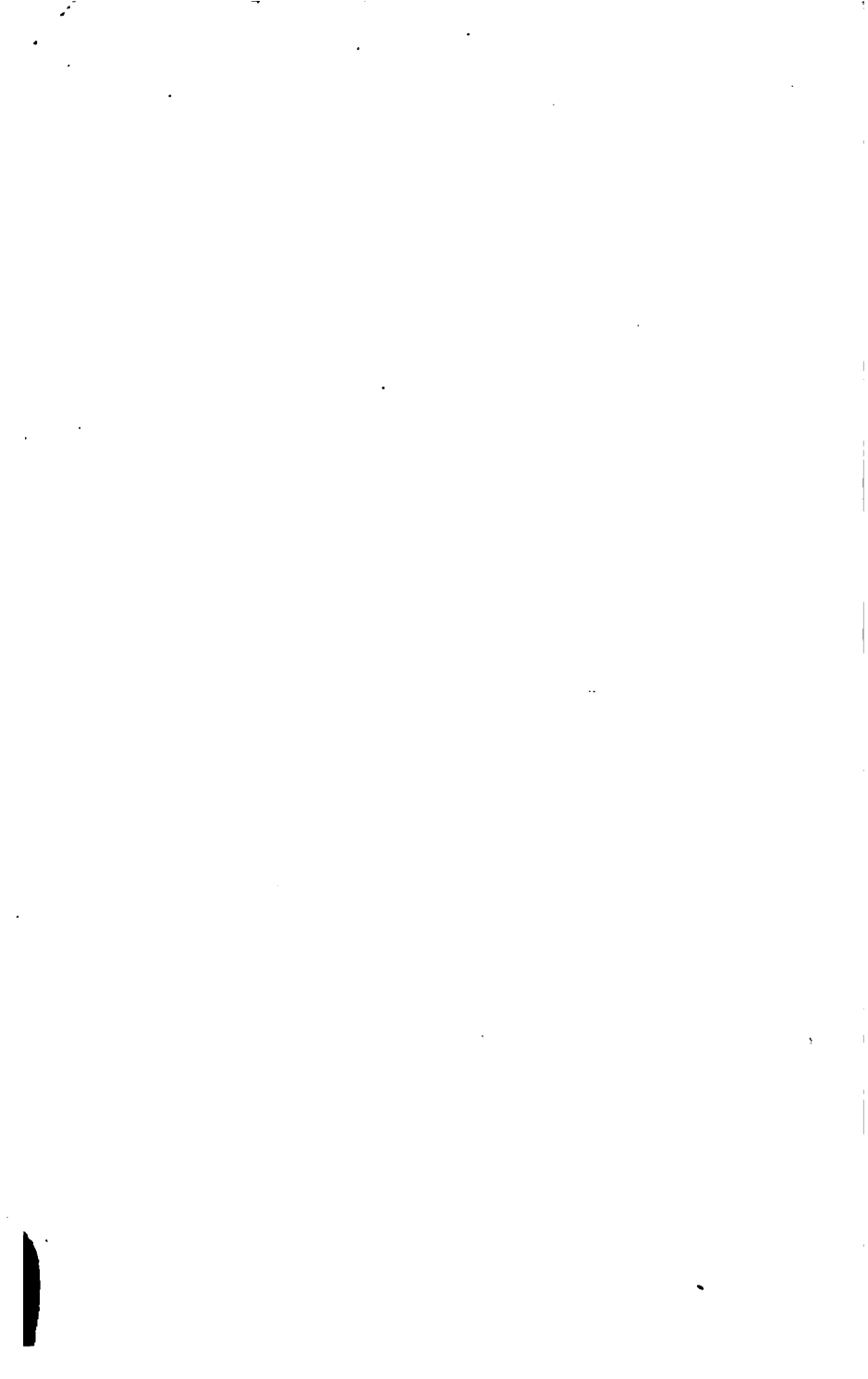
"Isaac walked in the road which leadeth to the well called the well of him that liveth and seeth.

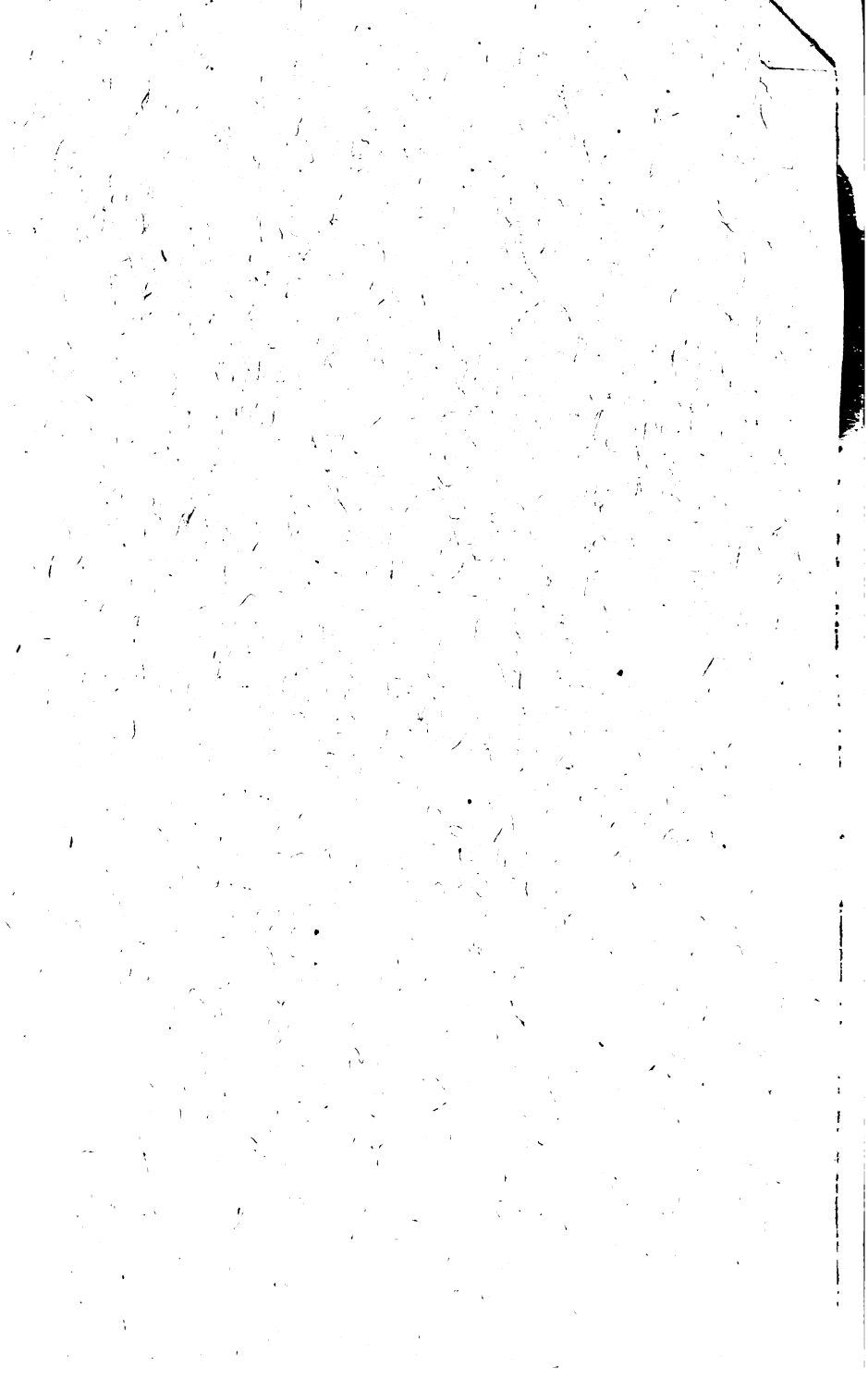
"Rebecca having beheld Isaac, said: 'Who is this man that is come to meet me?'

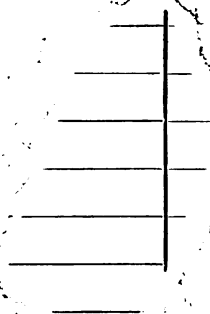
"Then Isaac brought her into his tent and took Rebecca for his wife, and he greatly loved her."

Ebenezer and Déruchette exchanged glances.









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